

PREPARING FOR AND FOLLOWING UP A VISIT TO THE DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP MEMORIAL SITE

RECOMMENDED LESSON STRUCTURE

(45 MINUTES BEFORE THE VISIT | 45 MINUTES AFTER THE VISIT)

TIME REQUIRED

45 minutes before the visit | 45 minutes after the visit

LEARNING GOALS

The goal of the two lessons is to prepare for and reflect on a visit to the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site. The digital 360° setting encourages students to explore on their own and in the best case scenario it kindles an interest for their forthcoming visit to the Memorial Site. In addition, it aims to prevent students from becoming overwhelmed and it guards against misguided expectations when they encounter the real place. During their second involvement with the 360° tour after their visit, the students are prompted to reflect on the changes made to historical buildings and the role played by contemporary witnesses.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LESSONS

The students work with both the 360° tour and the exercise sheets presented below. The two exercises on exercise sheet 1 are devoted to preparing a visit. The students explore the 360° tour on their own and then extend their knowledge by studying the info points of a panorama. Here they are encouraged to formulate questions for their visit to the Dachau Memorial Site.

After their visit, the students deepen their knowledge and reflect on their experience. The first follow-up exercise encourages them to think about the different historical phases they encountered during their visit, as well as to analyze the different approaches taken to the historical buildings and structures. The second follow-up question offers the chance to study different biographies of former prisoners and think about the importance of contemporary witnesses.

POSSIBLE MATERIALS FOR PREPARING THE LESSONS

- PDF "General Information on the 360° Tour 'Panoramas of Remembrance'"; download available at: <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/historical-site/360-tour-panoramas-of-remembrance/>
- General tips and pointers for preparing and reflecting on a visit to the Dachau Memorial Site: <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/education/preparing-for-and-reflecting-on-a-visit/>

NECESSARY MATERIAL
FOR THE LESSONS

- 360° tour “Panoramas of Remembrance”
<https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/historical-site/360-tour-panoramas-of-remembrance>
- Sufficient number of technological devices for use in small groups (smartphones, tablets, laptops or computers)
- Exercise sheets 1 and 2
- Photograph of the International Monument in the Dachau Memorial Site or the description of the techniques used to identify expectations and fears:
<https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Method-Asking-about-Expectations-and-Fears.pdf>

TIME STRUCTURE FOR THE PREPARATION LESSON

TIME	CONTENTS	LEARNING GOALS	TEACHING TECHNIQUE	NECESSARY MATERIALS / MEDIA
10 min.	<p>Introduction to the theme and ask about the prior knowledge and expectations of the students</p> <p>Has anyone already been to a concentration camp memorial site?</p> <p>Has anyone already been to the Dachau Memorial Site?</p> <p>What are you expecting to see in the Dachau Memorial Site?</p> <p>What kind of impression does the International Monument make on you?</p> <p>Alternative: ask about expectations and fears</p>	<p>Find out about prior knowledge, expectations and, possibly, fears</p>	<p>Conversation in class, possibly short individual work</p>	<p>Photo of the International Monument in the Dachau Memorial Site / beamer or docucam</p> <p>Alternative: Sheets, whiteboards, sentence beginnings, magnets; see method for asking about expectations and fears: https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Method-Asking-about-Expectations-and-Fears.pdf</p>

TIME STRUCTURE FOR THE PREPARATION LESSON

TIME	CONTENTS	LEARNING GOALS	TEACHING TECHNIQUE	NECESSARY MATERIALS / MEDIA
25 min.	<p>Form small groups and assign technological devices</p> <p>Possibly give pointers on using the 360° tour and navigation</p> <p>Pass out the exercise sheet to work on exercises 1 and 2 (exercise sheet 1)</p> <p>Self-exploration of the 360° tour</p>	<p>Learn about the Dachau Memorial Site and gain first insights into themes and issues</p> <p>Formulate questions for the visit</p>	Working in a small group	<p>Technological devices (smart-phones, tablets, laptops or computer)</p> <p>Access to the 360° tour “Panoramas of Remembrance”</p> <p>Copies of exercise sheet 1</p>
10 min.	<p>Ask about the experiences the students / pupils have with the 360° tour</p> <p>Collect questions Possibly ask if there are locations on the grounds which someone does not wish to go to</p> <p>Practical pointers on visiting the Memorial Site</p>	<p>Collect impressions</p> <p>Exchange ideas</p> <p>Concrete preparation for the Memorial Site visit</p>	Conversation in class	<p>Helpful for the preparation: https://www.kz-ge-denkstaette-dachau.de/en/education/preparing-for-and-reflecting-on-a-visit/ </p>

TIME STRUCTURE FOR THE FOLLOW-UP LESSON

TIME	CONTENTS	LEARNING GOALS	TEACHING TECHNIQUES	NECESSARY MATERIALS / MEDIA
10 min.	<p>Refer to the Memorial Site visit and go back to expectations and fears expressed before the visit</p> <p>(written or verbal)</p>	<p>Reflect on the Memorial Site visit</p>	<p>Conversation in class</p>	<p>Access to the expectations and ears expressed before the visit</p> <p>Possibly consult method for asking about expectations and fears: https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Method-Asking-about-Expectations-and-Fears.pdf</p>
20 min.	<p>Form small groups and assign the devices</p> <p>Hand out the exercise sheet to work on exercises 1 and 2 (exercise sheet 2)</p> <p>Independent use of the 360° tour</p>	<p>Analyze some of the contents of the 360° tour</p> <p>Reflect on changes made to historical buildings</p> <p>Reflection on the theme of contemporary witnesses</p>	<p>Work in small group</p>	<p>Technological devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops or computer)</p> <p>Access to the 360° tour “Panoramas of Remembrance”</p> <p>Copies of the exercise sheet 2</p>
15 min.	<p>Joint discussion of the results of the exercises 1 und 2 (exercise sheet 2)</p>	<p>Consolidate the results of the work</p> <p>Reflect together</p>	<p>Conversation in class</p>	<p>Access to the 360° tour “Panoramas of Remembrance” / beamer or docucam</p>



Photograph of the International Monument at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, taken in 2012, KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau.



EXERCISE SHEET 1



Here's the way to the 360° tour "Panoramas of Remembrance":
www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/360-panoramen/start-en/

- 1** Explore "Panoramas of Remembrance" independently or in a small group of max. three students.

- 2** Select from the menu item "Show overview" a panorama that contains info points.



- a)** Read through the info points (again) and summarize what is at this location today in the Dachau Memorial Site and which building was there at the time of the concentration camp.
- b)** Formulate questions on the selected location. Note down everything that is unclear or about which you'd like to know more. Bring these questions with you to the tour of the Dachau Memorial Site.



The First Crematorium Building

Hidden somewhat behind trees is a small half-timber building. It housed the first crematorium, built in 1940. Back then there were fewer trees around the building.

At first, the SS had the corpses buried not far from the camp or sent them to be cremated at Munich Eastern Cemetery. Once the Second World War began, the Nazis deported more and more people from the occupied territories to the concentration camps which caused a sharp rise in the number of deaths in the camps. The SS therefore built a first crematorium with a double oven in the summer of 1940. Just a year later, the capacity of this crematorium was already insufficient.

The responsibility to cremate the dead was given to a special prisoner detail. After a few months, the SS murdered these prisoners and replaced them with new men. The aim was to prevent any precise knowledge about what was going on to get out.

The SS also used the secluded crematorium area as an execution site. Prisoners were hung or shot in the back of the neck.

Glossary

Camps: concentration and extermination camps

From 1933 concentration camps (German abbreviation: KZ) were set up in Germany, beginning in 1938 also in countries occupied by Germany. Imprisoned were all persons categorized as not belonging to Nazi society or themselves did not belong to it.



What can you (not) see?



Illustration 50: The first crematorium building, 2024.
 © KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau, Fotograf: Maximilian Luzzak-Kirchner.



A prisoner remembers

The former camp prisoner Karel Kašák on plans to enlarge the crematorium area:

"February 1942: yesterday the plans for the crematorium and the new ovens to be built were completed. Together with the old ones, there will now be six ovens in total."

Source: Die Aufzeichnungen von Karel Kašák. Zusammenestellt, kommentiert und mit Anmerkungen versehen von Stanislav Zámečník, in: Wolfgang Denz / Barbara Distel: Orte der Erinnerung (Dachauer Hefte, Band 11). München 1995, S. 167-251, hier: S. 195.



Example for the three info points in the panorama "Former Crematorium Buildings"



EXERCISE SHEET 2



Here's the way to the 360° tour
"Panoramas of Remembrance":
www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/360-panoramen/start-en/

- 1** Use the menu item "Show overview" to select the following three panoramas one after the other: *Former Main Guardhouse, Reconstructed Barracks, and Former Crematorium Buildings.*

- a) Look at the info point
"What can you (not) see?" in each panorama and compare the historical and contemporary photographs.



- b) Compare the photo pairs and analyze the different approaches to the buildings and structures which were there in the concentration camp.

Former Main Guardhouse



Historical photos



Contemporary photos

Reconstructed Barracks



Historical photos



Contemporary photos

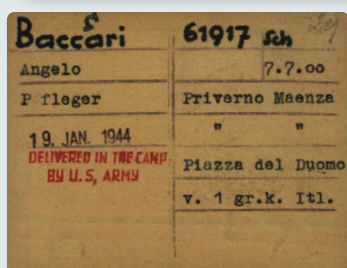
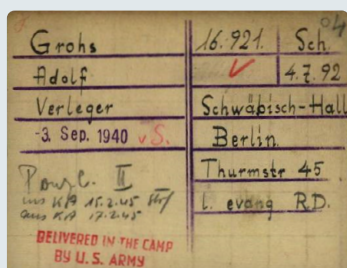
Former Crematorium



Historical photos



Contemporary photos



- 2** Use the menu item "Show overview" to select the three panoramas one after the other: *Former Jourhaus, Reconstructed Barracks, and International Monument.*

- a) Read through the info point
"A prisoner remembers" in each panorama.
Here you find quotes from Karl Adolf Groß, Angelo Baccari, and Vladimir Feierabend.



- b) Compare the three quotes and note down when each of the quotes was made and which historical phase they refer to.

- c) Analyze the challenges which may arise when using statements made by contemporary witnesses at different times.