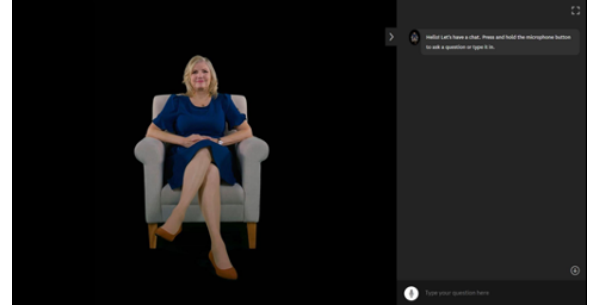


# Teach with Dimensions in Testimony

## *Guidelines for Educators*

### What is Dimensions in Testimony?

USC Shoah Foundation's [Dimensions in Testimony \(DiT\)](#) provides students the opportunity to have a conversational experience with interactive biographies of Holocaust and genocide survivors far into the future. The technology preserves their stories and enables users to dialogue with these witnesses to history to learn about their experiences, and develop empathy, understanding and respect.



Pinchas Gutter, a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust, was the first to be interviewed with DiT technology in 2014. Over the course of five days, Pinchas was asked over 1,000 questions about his life before, during and after the Holocaust. Since then, USC Shoah Foundation has continued to record interactive biographies, including biographies recorded in Hebrew, German, Spanish, Russian and Mandarin. This innovation is accessible in IWitness.

### Dimensions in Testimony in Education

Engaging with an interactive biography through DiT on IWitness empowers students to be agents of their own learning. Led by their own inquiry, students ask questions and interrogate the primary source to learn about a survivor's life experiences, the historical context surrounding their story, as well as broader messages of hope, faith, empathy and humanity. These interactive conversations provide students a personal and moving experience that not only connects them to the story of a survivor's life but makes them feel connected to the survivor personally. Students develop a deepened understanding about the power of testimony as a primary source to learn about the past.

This humanizing technology develops students' critical literacy by enabling them to interpret the impact of a survivor's experiences on their identity, their attitudes and their beliefs; by encouraging students to explore their perspective; by empowering learners to interrogate their message; by engaging their multimodal capacities; and by inspiring self-reflection.

# Teach with Dimensions in Testimony

## Guidelines for Educators

### Strategies for Engaging Students with Dimensions in Testimony

#### Access Interactive Biographies in IWitness

- Determine whether this interaction will be whole class or independent work—either is effective.
- Explore the multiple features connected to an interactive biography that aim to contextualize a survivor's life experiences and the themes shared in their story.

#### > An Introduction

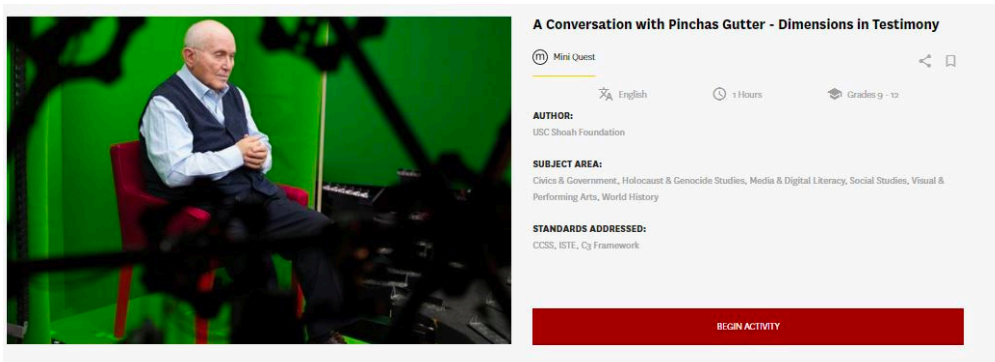
- *Five-Minute Summary*: For an overview of the interviewee's life, ask, "Can you share your five-minute summary?"
- *Strategy*: As students listen, have them write 3-5 topics that they would like to learn more about.

#### > More about the survivor

- Use the biographical information about them, access their short curated clips on [the Watch page](#), view the gallery of images and/or watch their full testimony.
- *Strategy*: Have students use the "KWL" graphic organizer and write what they learn about the survivor from each source, what they want to know and the questions they may want to ask.

#### > Contextualize

- Find resources, clips and activities that can build students' content knowledge and deeper understanding for the survivor's lived experiences.
- *Strategy*: Assign an activity. Use the [Educator Quick Tips](#) for support with how to make a student group.



The screenshot displays the IWitness interface for a video titled "A Conversation with Pinchas Gutter - Dimensions in Testimony". On the left is a video player showing Pinchas Gutter, an elderly man with glasses, sitting in a red chair against a green background. On the right is a metadata panel with the following information:

- Mini Quest** (with a back arrow and a share icon)
- Language: English
- Duration: 1 Hours
- Grades: 9 - 12
- AUTHOR:** USC Shoah Foundation
- SUBJECT AREA:** Civics & Government, Holocaust & Genocide Studies, Media & Digital Literacy, Social Studies, Visual & Performing Arts, World History
- STANDARDS ADDRESSED:** CCSS, ISTE, C3 Framework

At the bottom of the metadata panel is a red button labeled "BEGIN ACTIVITY".

# Teach with Dimensions in Testimony

## Guidelines for Educators

**Interact with a Holocaust survivor's descendant:** Ask Mona one of the following questions or have students provide questions about aspects of her experience they are curious to know more about.

*Can you tell me about your childhood?*

*What was your mother's childhood like in Austria?*

*What happened to your mother's family during the war?*

*Why did Lisa's family send her on the Kindertransport?*

*How do you feel about being the child of survivors?*

*Why did you decide to study music?*

*Why did you decide to tell your mother's story?*

*What is a challenge of being a child of survivors?*

*How did your family's trauma shape your life?*

*What is your message for us?*

*Do you have a message for students?*

**Activate the Transcript Function:** A transcript of the conversational exchange with the survivor is generated when the system is activated. Click the download symbol (down arrow) to access and download the transcript before exiting the page.

*\*Please note: The Dimensions in Testimony transcript feature is a work in progress and might misinterpret your words. Thank you for your patience while we continue to improve the technology.*

### Important Technical Tips for Engaging with Dimensions in Testimony

- **Uninterrupted Environment:** When students interact with DiT, be sure their experience is uninterrupted, as best as possible. Allow them to listen to all the responses to questions completely from beginning to end. This helps students tune into the experience while also avoiding possible errors in the DiT system.

- **Rephrasing Questions:** Encourage students to rephrase questions until they receive a relevant response.

- **DIT Incorrect Response:** Even if the system responds with an unrelated response to a question, students will still find value with the interaction.

