

## **THE ROSENHEIM PROJECT**

### **Finding out about history from a personal point of view.**

In this project students will work in a subject integrated way. They will enhance their knowledge of an important historical period with the help of a blog-based role play.

Each student will create a character of their own, an avatar, in the city of Rosenheim, situated in the south of Germany. The character will live, act and reflect on events in Rosenheim, in Germany and in the world during the time period of 1919 – 1945. The identity of the writer (the student) will be kept secret from the readers of the blog.

Each student will consistently write a diary from the perspective of the avatar. The writing will follow the contents of the teaching of the time between the two World Wars, the Second World War and the Holocaust.

The different stories will together explain the events that took place in a way according to the historical view that claims: "The big picture is made of many small stories". In order to understand history and your own time it is important to learn from different perspectives and stories. The students will read each other's posts and they will be influenced by what others are writing. We see that as something good: The more voices that are heard, the more perspectives become visible!

A key text "written" by an avatar, Johannes Menkel, will be posted to support the writing of the students. Johannes Menkel is the mayor's secretary in Rosenheim.

To every task there will be instructions on what the students' avatars should reflect on.

The text produced during the project will be evaluated according to the goals of the subjects History and Swedish.

### **RULES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE TEXTS:**

The author has the freedom to create situations and actions in the diary as long as they do not contradict historical facts.

The views of the avatar do not have to be the views of the student.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION TO THE STUDENTS:**

Decide on which e-mail account to use. Always use the same account when posting your texts.

Check your e-mail account every now and then as you might get personal replies on your postings.

Read the posts of others and use them as inspiration.

Write the posts of your avatar.

Send your posts before the deadline each week.

### **CREATE YOUR AVATAR WITH THE HELP OF "THE 5 W'S"**

**Who** (is the person)? Decide on your character's age in 1919, a profession and some personal characteristics.

**Where** (is the person)? Decide on a place where your character lives and works. Try to create an inner image of the surroundings of your person.

**What** (does he/she do)? Decide on what your person does every day.

**Way** of life (Where is your person heading)? Decide on your person's plans and hopes for the future.

**Why** (does the person want this)? Decide on which motives that drive your character in different situations.

### **The First Diary Task**

You will write a first entry of your character's diary reflecting the time between 1919 and 1924. The contents of your text have to show how your character is affected by the financial situation of the time. At the same time your text should reveal how your character is affected by the hatred towards different ethnical groups.

#### **Aims in History:**

- Your text should show that you have knowledge about the hyperinflation, the unemployment, the weak democracy of the Weimar republic, the nationalism and the theories on racial differences.
- Your text should also show that you know how Hitler came into power and that he was not a leader until 1933.

### **The Second Diary Task**

Now it's time to write the second entry of the diary. Do like you did last time – set your imagination free and let your character live and get influenced by the historical events that happened in Germany in 1924 – 1934.

In order to succeed with your writing you will need to study the German history of the period. Be curious, start with what really interests you, keep in mind that your character gets

older with each diary entry. Choose a date for the beginning, middle and the end of the time period you are writing about, by doing so you will be able to capture the whole picture.

#### **Aims in Swedish writing:**

- Try to make your text come to life so that it is interesting to the reader through careful descriptions of events, environment and through the character's experiences.
- Use comparisons, metaphors and metonymy in your text.
- Pay attention to punctuation.
- Divide the text into paragraphs in order to make it easier to read.

#### **Aims in History:**

- You should explain why and how the Nazis came to power in Germany. The reasoning should be thorough and backed up by facts.

**Useful terms** to look up in the dictionary: propaganda, communism, aesthetics, agitator and civil duty.

### **The Third Diary Task**

Now it's time to write the last entry and put it on the blog.

The time is now 1934 – 1939 in your character's life. Some important events to consider are: Hitler has complete political power, there is no democracy, the war starts as Germany enters Poland, concentration camps are set up, the Kristallnacht, the start of Hitlerjugend, the alliance between Germany and Austria.

We suggest that you for example watch films on You Tube on the topic to get a feeling about the atmosphere of those days. You need to describe the character's adventures and what happened to him/her at the end. Your character does not have to continue living in Rosenheim after the beginning of the war. It would be unrealistic if everybody stayed where they were. Or maybe your character dies before the war is over? In this case you could describe what happened to him/her in a death announcement in a newspaper for example. Take your time before you write your conclusion.

This project was initiated by two teachers, Jonas Lundblad och Felix Ström, in Skarpnäcksskolan. They were inspired by the original idea of Lars Santelius.