

The following poems capture student reflections from the 7th Grade visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). The TBT 7th graders, their teachers, and several parents, visited the museum on March 2nd, as part of the 7th grade study of Jewish history. Following the museum visit, students submitted notes on their most powerful emotions, feelings, and memories from their visit. Students also shared observations during multiple class discussions. These observations captured how they interacted with the exhibits and the building. Their written notes, and notes from the discussions were re-molded by their teacher into the following poems. The poems were read during the school observance of Yom Hashoah.

Daniels Story.

*The morning was bright, fun, filled with family, filled with friends, filled with promise.
The afternoon was filled with confusion, hurt, exclusion, Ghettos, crowding, hunger.
The evening...the camps...lost...hated...torn apart...destroyed...starving...stench...no food...no family...just trying to survive.*

Why so many shoes?

Shoes...have you ever seen so many? Dirty, lifeless shoes...piled together, men's, women's, large, small. Shoes...have you ever seen so many? Dirty, lifeless shoes...piled together, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters. Why so many shoes? So many shoes...I never knew that so many shoes can break so many hearts.

The Train Car.

An empty train car is just sitting there in the middle of the room. It is silent, lifeless, without power. It cannot hurt, it cannot hate, and there are no tracks or engines for it to take anyone away. An empty train car is just sitting there in the middle of the room. Why is it so difficult to enter? Why is it so difficult to walk through? Why does it feel so crowded, so closed in? I must say Kaddish for those who were here. I must say Kaddish for myself. I fear I might not be able to get out. An empty train car is just sitting in the middle of the room. Why can't I walk in? It's just a train car.

Pictures.

So many pictures... pictures of hate, pictures of inhumanity, pictures that defy explanation, pictures which should not be shown, pictures that must not be forgotten. Pictures... far too hard to bear. So many pictures.

Hall of Remembrance.

Space...open...light...sky...candles...memories...reflection...pain...death...memories...reflection...light...candle ...healing...hope...the Hall of Remembrance.