

ATELIER PRIMO LEVI

Chemistry as a thread through the youth and the school years, the University, the first job experiences, the abyss and the attempt to come back to life

The image shows a standard periodic table of elements in Italian. The title is 'TAVOLA PERIODICA DEGLI ELEMENTI'. The elements are arranged in rows and columns, with their symbols and atomic numbers. The table is color-coded by groups and periods, with some elements highlighted in yellow and green. The table includes the following groups: IA, IIA, IIIA, IVA, VA, VIA, VIIA, and VIII. The elements are arranged in rows and columns, with their symbols and atomic numbers. The table is color-coded by groups and periods, with some elements highlighted in yellow and green.

Primo Levi (1919-1987) was a brilliant Italian chemist and talented author of novels, essays, magazine and newspaper articles, and poems.

The Jewish Italy is unique compared to other countries for historical reasons and for the specific scenario in which the II World War evolved: Primo Levi has powerfully described this diversity.

Having resisted to the “Entwürdigung” by means of his education and his attitude, he could survived the camp and he eventually became a tireless and painstaking witness of the Shoah.

The team of Progetto Memoria has been developing ATELIER PRIMO LEVI, a project which can be tailored according to the age of the students highlighting:

- the language used by Levi which is rich in metaphors, foreign terms, and educated quotations, and which offers a vital and vibrant choice of words, often selected from his huge chemical knowledge
- Levi’s ability as translator of books of Chemistry and novels and texts by other famous writers, i.e. Franz Kafka or Samuel Coleridge
- “the best science book ever written” namely The periodic System, an extraordinary collection of family memories, fiction, human bondage, personal facts, and anecdotes all inspired by twenty one elements of the periodic table

Times and spaces of the project are defined by the schools participating.

The general aims and the learning outcomes of the project are:

- acquiring spatial and temporal awareness of what happened between 1938 and 1945
- developing historical and topographic knowledge of the “universe” of Auschwitz
- reflecting on the ethical responsibility for narrating the past
- exploiting the multidisciplinary perspective in dealing with the Jewish persecution
- strengthening the civic behavior and promoting the mutual respect.