

Lesson Plan: Using the Spotify Model in History

Topic: Perspectives on World War II

Duration: 90 minutes

Teaching Methodology: *The Spotify Model* (Squads, Tribes, Chapters, and Guilds)

Overview for Teachers

This lesson plan integrates the **Spotify Model** into History teaching by breaking students into collaborative, structured teams that mirror **real-world teamwork**. Instead of a traditional teacher-led lesson, students **drive their own learning** through research, discussion, and debate.

To help you apply this, here's a **step-by-step guide** on how each element of the Spotify Model fits into your classroom.

Step 1: Understanding the Spotify Model in the Classroom

Before jumping into the lesson, let's clarify how the Spotify Model works in an educational setting:

- **Squads** – Small student groups working towards a common goal. Each Squad is **self-organizing**, meaning they decide how they will tackle their task.
- **Tribes** – A group of Squads working on related themes, allowing for broader collaboration and shared learning.
- **Chapters** – Specialized groups that focus on **skills** rather than content, helping students refine abilities (e.g., research techniques, debate skills).
- **Guilds** – Passion-based learning communities that **extend beyond the lesson**, fostering deeper exploration of themes (e.g., propaganda analysis).

This approach ensures that every student is engaged, while also **building autonomy, collaboration, and critical thinking**—all essential historical analysis skills.

Step 2: Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Analyse different perspectives on World War II.
- Collaborate in Squads to research and present findings.
- Apply critical thinking to compare narratives from multiple sources.

- Reflect on how historical perspectives shape our understanding of events.

Step 3: Lesson Breakdown

1. Squad Formation (10 minutes)

- Divide students into **Squads** of 3-4 members.
- Each Squad is assigned a **specific perspective** to research:
 - **Allied Soldiers** (British, American, Soviet)
 - **Axis Soldiers** (German, Italian, Japanese)
 - **Civilians** (occupied countries, Holocaust survivors, home front workers)
 - **Political Leaders** (Churchill, Roosevelt, Hitler, Stalin)

→ **Teacher's Role:** Explain that each Squad **controls their own learning**—they will decide how to research, what sources to use, and how to present their findings.

2. Sprint: Research & Collaboration (30 minutes)

- Students **research their assigned perspective** using primary and secondary sources.
- Each Squad member takes responsibility for a different aspect (e.g., key events, motivations, impact).

→ **Chapters in Action:** While Squads focus on content, some students may need additional support. This is where **Chapters** come in:

- A **Source Analysis Chapter** (a small group of students) focuses on helping peers evaluate the reliability of sources.
- A **Writing & Communication Chapter** supports students in structuring their arguments.

→ **Teacher's Role:** Move between groups, guiding discussions but allowing students to take ownership of the process.

3. Stand-ups: Cross-Squad Collaboration (10 minutes)

- Each Squad pairs with another Squad researching a different perspective.
- They exchange insights and **challenge each other's interpretations**.

- They refine their conclusions based on the discussion.

→ **Tribes in Action:** Squads within similar themes form **Tribes** to share knowledge (e.g., all military perspectives form one Tribe, all civilian perspectives form another).

→ **Teacher's Role:** Encourage students to ask, "*What do we agree on? What do we disagree on? Why?*"

4. Presentation & Debate (20 minutes)

- Each Squad presents their findings in a **structured discussion**:
 - One member presents key insights.
 - Another member challenges opposing viewpoints.
 - The class engages in **cross-Squad questioning**, applying critical thinking.

→ **Guilds in Action:** Some students take on **Guild roles**, adding extra depth:

- A **Debate Guild** moderates discussions.
- A **Media & Propaganda Guild** analyses how different WWII perspectives were shaped by propaganda.

→ **Teacher's Role:** Act as a facilitator, ensuring students engage critically with each other's arguments.

5. Reflection & Review (20 minutes)

Students engage in a **self and peer review**:

- What challenged their prior knowledge?
- How did collaboration improve their understanding?
- How does this method compare to traditional history lessons?

→ **Agile Thinking:** Students analyse *what worked, what didn't, and how to improve next time*.

→ **Teacher's Role:** Guide reflection through questions like:

- *Did your Squad's viewpoint change after hearing others?*
- *What did you learn from the way other Squads worked?*

Step 4: Assessment & Extension

Assessment:

- **Formative:** Observe Squad discussions, evaluate source analysis, and assess presentations.
- **Summative:** Students submit a **perspective analysis report**, comparing their Squad's viewpoint with another Squad's.

Extension Activities:

- **Advanced students** research lesser-known perspectives (e.g., resistance movements, neutral countries).
- A follow-up **Guild project** could explore WWII **propaganda and media representation**.

Step 5: Why This Works for History Teachers

This lesson goes beyond a **lecture-based** approach, making history more engaging and **interactive**.

Why is this better than traditional group work?

- **Autonomy:** Students take charge of their own learning.
- **Collaboration:** Cross-Squad discussions mimic **real-world historical analysis**.
- **Engagement:** History is no longer passive—students become **active investigators**.
- **Skill Development:** Encourages research, critical thinking, debate, and teamwork—all transferable beyond the classroom.

Key Takeaways for Teachers:

- **You're a facilitator, not a lecturer.** Give students **ownership** over their learning.
- **Trust the process.** Squads may struggle at first, but that's where learning happens.
- **Encourage reflection.** The *Agile cycle* means students continuously improve.
- **Make it real-world.** Show students that history is not just a list of facts—it's an ongoing debate shaped by evidence and perspective.