



HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY TRUST

*Learning from genocide -
for a better future*

Life Stories of Young People Persecuted by the Nazis, Educational Resource

Guide for Facilitators and Teachers

This resource was made by members of the HMDT Youth Forum to help engage mature teenagers and young adults with the Holocaust and Nazi persecution of other groups. It tells the stories of twelve teenagers / young adults who were persecuted by the Nazis, referencing their own personal accounts to help better understand their experiences. A good setting for this workshop could be at a University or a Sixth Form College.



Life Stories of Young People Persecuted by the Nazis

There are two versions of this resource, the first is suitable for A4 printing, and the second for A3, A2 and A1.

There are two recommended methods to facilitate the workshop:

Poster format:

Print each individual life story as a poster. These can be used to create a small exhibition, or can be placed strategically around your school, college or university to allow students to spend some time reading the testimonies of those persecuted by the Nazis.

Workshop format:

A facilitator could use these resources to organise a more formal workshop to allow students to have a designated time to learn about and remember those persecuted by the Nazis.

Suggested method:

1. Discuss preconceptions about the Holocaust with participants.

Ask the following questions:

- What was the Holocaust?
- When and where did the Holocaust take place?
- Who was persecuted?
- How were they persecuted?
- Who were the persecutors?

2. Continue by asking the participants to discuss what might have affected how each persecuted individual experienced the Holocaust or Nazi persecution?

Examples for these include:

- Why they were persecuted (Jewish people, people with disabilities, Gypsy Roma Traveller, gay people)
- Then also: Age, Sex, Physical Fitness, Location, Luck etc.



3. Lay out the 12 different sources written by the young people persecuted by the Nazis. Give the participants 30 minutes to explore these individual testimonies. Included on each poster is a trigger warning, context and a glossary. Ask them to consider the questions on each poster to help them study the source in more depth. The idea is not for each individual to see every source, but to see a selection and study the sources as a collective.

4. During this time, we recommend asking students to avoid talking and use it as a time for personal thought. It may help to play slow, quiet music during this time.

5. Once the time is up, revisit the questions in part 1, and ask them to reassess if their answers have changed.

Then, ask the following additional questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between the sources they studied?
- What do these sources imply about the identities of those persecuted by the Nazis?
- To what extent did the location of the young person impact persecution?
- What did the participants find surprising / learn from the resource?

6. Participants should then choose one of the sources that they felt connected to the most, and if possible, move and stand by the respective poster.

Participants should be asked:

- Why did you choose this source?
- Why is learning about individual people in the Holocaust and the Nazi persecutions of other groups so important?

7. Stress to participants the importance of humanizing the Holocaust, the importance of the individual story. Ask them to remember the name of an individual who was persecuted, their story and testimony. Ask them to share this story with someone / light a candle or take a moment of silence for them on Holocaust Memorial Day.

Trigger warnings:

- Sexual Assault
- Murder
- Sterilisation
- Torture
- Antisemitism
- Ableism
- Anti-Roma Hate
- Genocide
- Mentions of Suicide
- Graphic Descriptions
- Starvation
- Forced and Slave Labour
- Mental Issues
- Police Brutality

These topics may be triggering for certain participants, please be mindful of this when using the resource.

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Context:

These terms and their definitions are also included on each source where mentioned.

What was the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi regime, its allies and collaborators.

When did the Holocaust take place?

The Holocaust was an evolving process that took place throughout Europe between 1933 and 1945. The Holocaust era began in January 1933 when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany. It ended in May 1945, when the Allied Powers defeated Nazi Germany in World War II.

Who was persecuted?

The Holocaust refers to the murder and genocide against the Jewish people, however the Nazis also persecuted and murdered millions of other people, including Roma and Sinti peoples, gay people, people with disabilities and other groups.

How were people persecuted?

The Nazis persecuted people in different ways including: deadly living conditions, brutal mistreatment, starvation, mass shootings, mass gassings, and specially designed killing centres.

When the Nazis came to power in Germany, they didn't immediately start with mass murder. They started by sharing antisemitic messaging and excluding Jews from German society. This continued into organised violence against Germany's Jews followed by a plan the Nazi leaders referred to as "The Final Solution" - the organized and systematic mass murder of European Jews.

Where did the persecution take place?

The Holocaust took place throughout German and Axis (Germany's allies in World War II) controlled Europe. This included countries from Eastern European countries like Lithuania all the way though to countries in Western Europe like France.

Jews and other persecuted groups living in different Nazi controlled countries experienced persecution differently.



Why is it important to learn about the life stories of individuals when studying the Holocaust and the persecution of other groups?

It can be hard, for example with the Holocaust, to comprehend a number such as six million. It is so large that it can be easy to forget that behind each of those six million Jews, there was a family, a story and a life before the Holocaust. It is much easier to understand and empathize on an individual basis.

What is Holocaust Memorial Day?

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) takes place each year on 27 January. On HMD, we remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of other people killed under Nazi persecution of other groups and in genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. Holocaust Memorial Day is for everyone. Each year across the UK, thousands of people come together to learn more about the past and take action to create a safer future.

Find out more by visiting: hmd.org.uk



About the sources:

Name	Resource Type	Location	Themes
Abramek Kolpowicz	Poem	Łódź, Poland	Hopes and dreams, Ghetto life
Anton (Bubili) Fojn	Transcript of spoken testimony	Austria	Distress, Roma persecution, Concentration Camp
Ella Liebermann	Artwork	Berlin, Germany <i>and then</i> Bedin, Poland	Transport, Suffering
Ernest Mayer	Artwork	Cologne, Germany <i>and then</i> the United Kingdom	Kindertransport, Family Separation
Eva Hyman	Diary entries	Oradea, Romania <i>(this became Hungary in 1940)</i>	Kindertransport, Family Separation
Franziska (Fanny) Schwarz *	Transcript of spoken testimony	Munich, Germany	Hopes and dreams, Ghetto life
Janina Bauman	Diary entries	Warsaw, Poland	Life in hiding, Jewish identity
Miriam Korber	Diary entries	Romania	Ghetto life, Hopes and Dreams, Uncertainty
Petr Ginz	Opinion piece (in a magazine)	Prague, Czechoslovakia	Theresienstadt, Aspiration
Simon Fryd	Letter	France	Resistance, Aspiration
Yitskhok Rudashevski	Diary entries	Vilnius, Lithuania	Ghetto Life, Holocaust by Bullets
Anonymous Girl	Diary entries	Łódź, Poland	Ghetto life, Starvation, Family dynamics

* This source may be particularly triggering for any participant with a history of abortion, miscarriage or infertility. If you are using this source in a public space, please be mindful of this.



Glossary:

These terms and their definitions are also included on each source where mentioned.

Antisemitism:

Antisemitism (anti-Jewish hatred) is hatred, bigotry, prejudice or discrimination against Jews as a religious or ethnic group.

Concentration Camp:

Throughout German-occupied Europe, the Nazis established camps to detain and kill those they perceived as their enemies, including Jews, Roma and Sinti (sometimes derogatorily, referred to as Gypsies), gay people, and others. Imprisonment in a concentration camp was of unlimited duration, was not linked to a specific act, and was not subject to any judicial review.

Work Camp:

A type of concentration camp set up by the Nazis with the intent of forcing prisoners to work, often in support of the war effort.

Death Camp:

A type of concentration camp set up by the Nazis with the intent of mass murder. This would commonly take place using a gas chamber.

Einsatzgruppen:

Units of the Security Police and SD (the SS intelligence service), as well as reserve Police Battalions and local Police groups that followed behind the German army as it invaded the Soviet Union that acted as mobile killing units. They were key perpetrators of mass shooting actions that killed a third of the Jews in the Holocaust.

Ghetto:

A confined area of a city in which members of a minority group (in this case Jews and Roma and Sinti) are compelled to live. The first use of the term “ghetto” for a section of a city in which Jews lived was in Venice, Italy, in 1516.

Liquidation:

The Nazis used euphemistic terms to disguise their perpetration of genocide. Germans and their allies and collaborators murdered ghetto residents en masse and dissolved ghetto administrative structures. The Nazis called this ‘Liquidation’.

Roma and Sinti:

A nomadic people whose ancestors migrated to Europe from India. Nazi Germany and its Axis partners persecuted and killed large numbers of Roma during the era of the Holocaust. Roma and Sinti are sometimes derogatively referred to as Gypsies.



Trigger Warnings:

The themes listed below occur throughout this resource.

Each resource page has a '*Trigger Warnings*' section in the top right corner.

These topics may be triggering for certain participants, please be mindful of this when using the resource.

- **Sexual Assault**
- **Murder**
- **Sterilisation**
- **Torture**
- **Antisemitism**
- **Ableism**
- **Anti-Roma Hate**
- **Mentions of Suicide**
- **Graphic Descriptions**
- **Starvation**
- **Forced Labour**



Important Note for Teachers - After the Lesson

Please let us know that you and your class have marked HMD. We would love to hear about any follow up activities. Please contact the Education Officer on education@hmd.org.uk. This helps us to know how resources are used in schools, and your school may be featured as a case study when we talk about the range of activities taking place across the UK for HMD.

Take the learning further:

Learn more about genocides at hmd.org.uk/holocaustandgenocides. Find secondary school assemblies and lesson plans at hmd.org.uk/schools.

Find more resources such as life stories, films and activities at hmd.org.uk/resources.



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