

In Search of Better Days

Teacher Guide

TORONTO HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

A MUSEUM BY UJA

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About the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre

The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre was officially opened on September 22, 1985. The Centre is an entity of the UJA Federation and receives an annual allocation from the Federation.

Mission: Through its museum and programs, the Neuberger generates knowledge and understanding about the Holocaust and serves as a forum for dialogue about civil society for present and future generations.

Programs: The Neuberger reaches 20,000 students annually through school visits to the museum and education programs, and an additional 30,000 members of the general community through its signature program, Holocaust Education Week. Cited by scholars as one of the most comprehensive vehicles for Holocaust education and remembrance in the world, it has been recognized as a “Best Practice” in the field by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Year-round programming - such as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Raoul Wallenberg Day, and Yom HaShoah - demonstrates the Centre’s commitment to dynamic and meaningful programming across the GTA.

About the Survivors

Olga Mittelman

Olga Mittelman (née Friedman) known as Olly, was born in Kosice, Czechoslovakia, on January 12, 1922. Growing up, Olly attended a Jewish school, but she never considered herself religious. Olly, her parents, and siblings were taken to Auschwitz in June 1944. Her parents were immediately killed in the gas chambers. She spent two days in Auschwitz II-Birkenau, then was transferred to several camps in Latvia and Germany. She was forced on a death march for three weeks to Ravensbrück Concentration Camp in 1945. She was liberated by the Soviet Army that same year. After a month in Germany, she made the journey home to Czechoslovakia, and reunited with her brother and aunt who also survived the war.

Olly met her husband Andrew after the war. He was also a Jewish Auschwitz survivor. Their first daughter Mary was almost three years old when they immigrated to Canada in February 1950. Olly lived in Toronto for the rest of her life, but she returned to the places where she grew up several times. She had 3 children and 11 grandchildren. Olly passed away in March 2004.

Leon (Leibish) Glatter

Leon (Leibish) Glatter was born in Lublin, Poland, on September 29, 1910. lived in the town of Novograd-Volynsky until his father was killed in a pogrom in 1918. Leon’s mother took him and his brother to Warsaw, Poland and left them in the care of Dr. Janusz Korczak at the home for children, Dom Sierot. Leon left in 1927 to and by 1935 he co-owned a printing factory in Warsaw.

Leon joined the Polish Army in 1939 and was released from service after Warsaw fell to the Germans. He and his brother tried to illegally enter Russia on March 23, 1940, but were caught by Russian police. They were sentenced to 3-5 years of labour, and Leon was released after 1 year of work on the Trans-Siberian Railway. For the rest of the war, Leon peddled, smuggled, and stole food and materials in many places. Leon married his wife Toba, known as Toby, in 1941. His first daughter, Hanna, was born in 1943 in Russia. After the war, they made their way across Europe to the Windsheim Displaced Persons Camp in Germany, where Leon’s second daughter, Sara, was born.

Leon immigrated to Canada using the Garment Workers Scheme. With the help of some of his wife's relatives in Canada, and members of the Canadian Jewish Congress, Leon travelled to Canada at the end of 1949. Leon also helped his brother immigrate from Israel to Canada in the early 1950s. Leon worked in Toronto as a lithographer at 216 Simcoe Street. He took over an existing the business called Harcott & Coward after working there for 11 years. Leon had 3 children and 6 grandchildren at the time he recorded his testimony for the Canadian Collection of the Visual History Archive in 1990.

Rabbi Erwin Schild

Rabbi Erwin Schild was born on March 9, 1920, in Mülheim, Germany. He attended a seminary for Jewish teachers in Würzburg where he was arrested during the Nazi violence of Kristallnacht on November 9-10, 1938. He was sent to Dachau concentration camp with his father and released one month later.

Rabbi Schild made the decision to escape Germany and moved to Holland with the help of the Orthodox Jewish group Agudath Israel. Once in Holland, he got a visa with help from the chief Rabbi of England and moved to Britain.

When Britain declared war on Germany in 1939, Rabbi Schild was arrested and held as an enemy alien by the British authorities because he was German. He was interned at Kempton Park and then the Isle of Man in Britain before being sent to Canada. He was then interned in Camp B in New Brunswick and then Camp I in Quebec.

Rabbi Schild was released in January 1942 due to efforts from the Canadian Jewish community. He moved to Toronto and studied at the seminary of Rabbi Avrom Price. He was ordained as a rabbi in 1947 and became the rabbi for Adath Israel Congregation that same year.

Rabbi Schild married his wife Laura in 1944. Rabbi Schild and Laura had three children, twelve grandchildren, forty-eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. Laura passed away on November 27, 2017. Rabbi Schild passed away on January 6, 2024.

Norma Dimitry

Norma Dimitry (née Nachama Sternsus) was born on December 9, 1923. She and her family lived in Wilno, Poland. Her father was a glazier (someone who works with glass), and Norma went to a trade school to learn how to be a seamstress.

The Nazis occupied Wilno in 1941. Norma and her family were forced to live in one of the two ghettos in Wilno. When the ghettos were liquidated in 1943, Norma and her family were moved into a nearby forced labour camp, Vilna Heereskraftfahrpark (HKP 562), because of her father's trade as a glazier.

In 1944, the Russian forces were advancing on Wilno. In response, the Nazis attempted to eradicate all inmates at Vilna-HKP. Norma hid in a basement, and then escaped by swimming through the sewers beneath the camp. Norma was the only person from her family to escape from Vilna-HKP.

Norma met her husband Nathan in Vilna, which became part of Russia after liberation. Together, they left Russia and then Poland. They lived in a DP Camp in Austria with their son until coming to Canada in 1948.

Norma lived in Toronto and worked at Eaton's department store. Norma and Nathan had three sons and six grandchildren. She passed away in 2017.

Nathan Dimitry

Nathan Dimitry (née Dimitrowsky) was born on December 10, 1920, in Ejszyski, Poland. Before the war, Nathan was living in a city called Lida.

After the war broke out, Nathan, his father, and his brother were sent to the Lida Ghetto. Nathan escaped the ghetto a few months before it was liquidated, and he joined the Russian partisans. He lived in the woods with the partisans and fought with these resistance fighters against the German forces.

In July 1944, the Russian partisans and army liberated Vilna. Nathan joined the army, and he was sent to the front. He stayed for a few months, but eventually he deserted. He met his wife, Norma, while he was in Vilna in 1944.

Nathan was in danger of being recognized and arrested as a deserter by the Russian army. So, Nathan and Norma left Wilno. They went to Poland first. Then, they went through Czechoslovakia to get to a DP Camp in Linz, Austria.

Nathan was recruited as a furrier from the DP Camp, even though he was not one. Nathan, Norma, and their son came to Canada in 1948. He learned how to be a furrier while living in Toronto.

Nathan and Norma had three sons and six grandchildren. Nathan passed away in the 1990s.

Max (Tibor) Eisen

Max (Tibor) Eisen was born on March 15, 1929, in Moldava, Czechoslovakia. In 1944, Max and his family were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. He was immediately separated from his mother and three younger siblings, but he was able to stay with his father and uncle for two months. In Auschwitz, Max was assigned to a manual labour unit. He later worked as a cleaner in the camp hospital.

In January 1945, Max was forced on a death march from Auschwitz to Mauthausen in Upper Austria. He was transferred to two other camps before being liberated by American soldiers on May 6, 1945. After the end of the war, Max returned to Czechoslovakia where he spent three years in an orphanage, and later lived in a DP camp in Austria. Max immigrated to Canada in October 1949. He arrived in Quebec City but came to Toronto where he stayed with friends that he had met after the end of the war. He began working in a book-binding company and eventually established a plastics manufacturing business.

Max met his wife Ivy soon after he came to Canada. They had two children, two grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Max traveled across Canada and the world to teach people about his experiences during the Holocaust. His memoir *By Chance Alone* was published in 2016. and won the CBC's Canada Reads contest in 2019. Max passed away on July 7, 2022.

Miriam Frankel

Miriam Frankel (née Grunglas) was born on May 18, 1927, in Dunajská Streda, Czechoslovakia. When she was a small child, Miriam and her family moved to Trieste, Italy. The family returned to Czechoslovakia in 1940 after being expelled from Italy for being Jewish.

In April 1944, Miriam and her family were forced to move to a ghetto. They were deported to Auschwitz six weeks later. Miriam was separated from her family and began work carrying bricks. In August 1944, she was transferred to a new camp where she worked in a munitions factory. She was transferred again to a different camp in March 1945 where she was liberated on April 14, 1945, by American soldiers.

After the end of the war, Miriam returned to Czechoslovakia for three years. She received care for a hip injury and attended an all-girls school. Miriam immigrated to Canada in 1948 as a war orphan. She arrived in Halifax but then went to Toronto where she lived with a family and attended school. Miriam met her husband Aaron, who was also a Jewish Holocaust survivor, within a year of moving to Toronto. They were married in 1950 and have three children, thirteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Miriam happily lives in Toronto.

Curriculum Connections

The activity's worksheets have been designed to incorporate Historical Thinking Concepts which meets Ontario Curricular guidelines. Students are encouraged to use inquiry-based learning techniques to complete the activity.

- Establish *historical significance*
- Use *primary source evidence*
- Identify *continuity and change*
- Analyze *cause and consequence*
- Take *historical perspectives*
- Understand the *ethical dimension* of historical interpretations.

In addition to the activity worksheets, discussion questions and additional activities have been formulated to meet Ontario Curricular guidelines in the following classes:

Social Studies, Grade 6

- **A2:** use the social studies inquiry process to investigate different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada
- **A3.7:** describe interactions between communities in Canada, including between newcomers and groups that were already in the country
- **B1:** explain the importance of international cooperation in addressing global issues, and evaluate the effectiveness of selected actions by Canada and Canadian citizens in the international arena
- **B2:** use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some global issues of political, social, economic, and/or environmental importance, their impact on the global community, and responses to the issues

History, Grade 7

- **A1:** analyze aspects of the experiences of various groups and communities...and compare them to the lives of people in present-day Canada
- **B1.3:** analyze the displacement experienced by various groups and communities

History, Grade 8

- **B3.2:** identify factors contributing to some key events and/or developments that occurred in and/or affected Canada

Issues in Canadian Geography, Grade 9 Academic (CGC1D) and Applied (CGC1P)

- **2.04D:** identify and explain the regional distribution patterns of various peoples across Canada e.g., Aboriginal peoples, Francophones, immigrant groups
- **I.01B:** demonstrate an understanding of similarities among cultures and the need to respect cultural differences
- **V.02B:** select and use appropriate methods and organizers to analyze the economic, social, and natural factors that contribute to the characteristics of selected regions and systems in Canada
- **V.01B:** demonstrate an understanding of how natural and human systems change over time and from place to place

Canadian History since World War I, Grade 10 Academic (CHC2D) and Applied (CHC2P)

- **D1.5:** describe some key political developments and/or government policies in Canada during this period..., and assess their significance for different non-Indigenous groups in Canada
- **D2.1:** describe some significant instances of social conflict and/or inequality in Canada during this period, with reference to various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities..., and analyze them from multiple perspectives
- **D3.5:** describe some key developments in immigration and in refugee and immigration policy in Canada during this period, and explain their significance for heritage and identities in Canada (e.g., with reference to the points system; origins and numbers of immigrants and refugees, including displaced persons after World War II; the domestic workers scheme; the growth of ethnic neighborhoods in Canada's largest cities)

Origins and Citizenship: The History of a Canadian Ethnic Group, Grade 11 (CHE3O)

- **A2.3:** apply the knowledge and skills developed in the study of history when analyzing current social, economic, and/or political issues, in order to enhance their understanding of these issues and their role as informed citizens
- **B2.1:** analyze ways in which human conflicts have shaped the history of this ethnic group in its country or region of origin
- **C1.1:** describe some ways in which social factors in their countries of origin influenced people's decisions to emigrate
- **C1.4:** describe some ways in which political factors in their countries of origin influenced people's decisions to emigrate
- **C2.1:** explain the role of conflict between groups in some people's decisions to emigrate, including, where applicable, the decision of members of the selected ethnic group
- **C3.1:** analyze the role of community support groups and organizations, both in the home country and in Canada, in some people's decisions to emigrate, including, where applicable, the decision of members of the selected ethnic group
- **C3.3:** analyze the role of migration myths perpetuated by governments and/or by ethnic communities on some people's decisions to migrate, including, where applicable, the decision of members of the selected ethnic group
- **C3.4:** explain why the selected ethnic group chose Canada as its destination
- **D1.2:** explain the impact of various economic factors on decisions relating to the initial settlement of some ethnic groups in Canada, including, where applicable, the selected ethnic group
- **D2.2:** analyze challenges that institutionalized racism and prejudice in Canada have presented to some ethnic groups, with a particular focus, where applicable, on the selected ethnic group
- **D3.1:** describe the contributions of individuals from various ethnic groups, including the specific ethnic group under study, to their own communities and to the development of culture and identity in Canada
- **D3.2:** describe various ways in which ethnic groups have contributed to culture and identity in Canada
- **E2.3:** analyze changes over time in social attitudes towards ethnic groups and cultural diversity, and explain the impact of these changes on relations between these groups and the broader society, with reference, where applicable, to the selected ethnic group
- **E3.2:** analyze intergenerational challenges experienced by families in ethnic communities in Canada

Canada: History, Identity, and Culture, Grade 12 (CHI4U)

- **D1.4:** analyze key economic trends and developments during this period and their contribution to the development of Canada, including the development of identity in Canada
- **D3.5:** analyze key changes in Canadian immigration policy during this period (e.g., amendments to the Immigration Act, Clifford Sifton’s “open door” policy, the Chinese Head Tax, emigration of British Home Children, responses to refugees, deportation of “enemy aliens”), and explain their impact on the development of Canada
- **D3.6:** explain the significance of the denial of citizenship rights to certain groups in Canada during this period
- **E3.5:** analyze how postwar immigration policies and settlement patterns, and related government policies, have helped shape identity and culture in Canada

World Issues: A Geographic Analysis, Grade 12 (CGW4U)

- **D1.2:** analyze the influence of immigration on global interdependence and on individual countries, and assess the role of national immigration policies in managing the impacts of population change and immigration

Content Guide

The “In Search of Better Days” educational kit includes tools and resources for both teachers and students. The website and accompanying activities have been designed to encourage students to analyze different types of primary sources, allowing them to develop and improve their analytical, interpretive, and critical thinking skills.

The program includes the following resources:

- An introductory PowerPoint.
 - The introductory PowerPoint is intended to provide students with context necessary to their understanding of the topics of the Holocaust and immigration. In the PowerPoint, students will learn about some of the terms that they will encounter throughout the activity, a brief introduction to the Holocaust within the context of the activity, the different types of primary sources that they will encounter in the activity, and a brief introduction to immigration policies within Canada in relation to Jewish immigrant experiences.
 - The PowerPoint also features a step-by-step guide explaining how to facilitate the program and its accompanying discussions and activities with students.
 - An accompanying PowerPoint script has also been provided for teachers for easy facilitation.
- The Activity Website/ Exhibit.
 - The activity website begins with an introduction, situating students at the end of the Second World War as Jewish Holocaust survivors begin to rebuild their lives. From there, the website is broken down into four distinct sections:
 - **Concept 1: What Now** (why leave Europe, where to go, what survivors know about Canada, and pre-existing Canadian immigration policies)
 - **Concept 2: Coming to Canada** (internment in Canada, displaced persons (DP) camps, worker schemes, and the War Orphans project)
 - **Concept 3: Life in Canada** (prejudice and discrimination in Canada, trauma, business and professional flourishing, and community building)

- **Concept 4: What is Canada, and Who Is It For** (what does Canada mean for the Holocaust survivors, how does Canada define itself, immigration to Canada today, and calls to action)
- The program features primary sources selected from various archives and institutions across Canada. A full list of source retrieval sites can be viewed in the “credits” section of the activity website. The types of primary sources that students will encounter in the program include:
 - Video oral testimonies from the USC Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive. Note that students will be engaging with short sections of a survivor’s testimony.
 - Historic and modern photographs that capture different people, places, and objects.
 - Historic and modern documents such as newspaper clippings, typed letters, and identification papers.
- A list of the Holocaust survivors that are featured in the program and their bibliography information.
- A Primary Source Discovery Worksheet for students to complete as they explore the website.
 - The PDF version of the worksheet is fillable for Google Classrooms but can also be printed and used for in-person learning.
- A list of discussion questions (both general and grade-specific) for students to engage with as a class after the worksheets have been completed.
- A list of additional activities that teachers can facilitate with students if desired.
- A list of vocabulary words students will encounter during the program, along with their definitions and a Frequently Asked Questions page where students can learn more about the Holocaust.
- A land acknowledgment highlighting the impact of immigration on Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

Facilitation Instructions

In this activity, students will be using the Historical Thinking Concepts and the Historical Inquiry Process to explore and interpret clips from survivor testimonies. The activity is one portion of a three-part lesson.

Materials

- *In Search of Better Days* Teacher Resource PowerPoint
- Printed or digital copies of the Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheet and/or the Object Discovery Worksheet for each group
- Internet access for viewing the *In Search of Better Days* website

Preparation

1. Review the Notes found in the Teacher Resource PowerPoint to determine the key points to share during the instructional section of the lesson.
2. Choose a section of the *In Search of Better Days* website to review. This will help you to gain an understanding of the types of primary sources your students will be encountering during the activity.

Lesson Instructions

Part 1: Background Information (20 minutes)

1. Begin the lesson by presenting the *In Search of Better Days* Teacher Resource PowerPoint to the whole class. Use the script provided in the Notes section of the PowerPoint to share the relevant background information with students.
2. Present the activity to students after completing the PowerPoint.

Part 2: Activity (20 minutes)

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4 to explore the first three sections of the *In Search of Better Days* website. Depending on the size of the class, more than one group will be exploring the same concept.
2. Distribute three Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheets and/or Object Discovery Worksheets to each group. The students in each group will work together to use the Worksheet to examine at least three video clips or objects in their assigned concept.
3. While working with the Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheet:
 - a. First, students will listen to a video clip of a Jewish Holocaust survivor explaining an aspect of their immigration experience.
 - b. After viewing the video, students will discuss the video and work as a group to answer the questions in the Worksheet.
 - c. Students will repeat this process for three video clips.
4. While working with the Object Discovery Worksheet:
 - a. First, students will examine a digital object related to a Jewish Holocaust survivor's immigration experience.
 - b. After examining the object, students will discuss the object and work as a group to answer the questions in the Worksheet.
 - c. Students will repeat this process for three objects.

Part 3: Discussion and Concept 4 (20-30 minutes)

1. Students can volunteer to share what they learned about the featured survivors using the Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheets and/or the Object Discovery Worksheets.
2. Select 4 to 5 discussion questions from those suggested in the next section of this Teacher Guide. Encourage students to reflect on the videos/object they viewed and examined as the foundation for the discussion.
3. As a class, explore the last section of the website to explore parallels in the survivors' experiences to today. In this exploration, use the materials on the website to highlight the ideal of Canada as a multicultural nation, how this ideal is or is not realized in Canadian society, and how students can take action in being welcoming to all Canadian.

Discussion Questions

General Discussion Questions

1. Do you know anyone who came to Canada from another country? What was their experience like?
2. What can we do to help make Canada more welcoming to new Canadians?
3. What does it mean to belong in Canada today? What does being Canadian mean to you?

Social Studies, Grade 6

1. Did any of the survivors' opinions about Canada surprise you? How did their perspectives compare to yours?

2. How were survivors greeted when they arrived in Canada? Why did they all have different experiences?
3. What did Canadians do to help Jewish Holocaust survivors after the end of the Second World War? What more could they have done?

History, Grade 7

1. After the Second World War, Jewish Holocaust survivors had to live in Displaced Persons Camps. How does the displacement of Jewish Holocaust survivors compare to the experiences of other people around the world and in Canada who have been displaced?
2. What do the experiences of Jewish Holocaust survivors teach us about other refugees and immigrants coming to Canada today?

History, Grade 8

1. What are the key factors in the survivors' decisions to leave Europe?
2. What are some characteristics of Canada that encouraged the survivors to immigrate here?

Issues in Canadian Geography, Grade 9 Academic (CGC1D) and Applied (CGC1P)

1. What criteria does Canada use when accepting new immigrants and refugees today? How are the criteria different today from what you saw in the activity?
2. Why might new immigrants to Canada want to settle in cities vs in rural areas? What are the advantages/ disadvantages of settling in each?
3. What are some ways that Jewish immigrants can maintain their cultural ties once they immigrate to Canada?

Canadian History since World War I, Grade 10 Academic (CHC2D) and Applied (CHC2P)

1. How did the implementation of different laws and policies around immigration impact Jewish immigrants' experiences when they were trying to come to Canada and once they arrived?
2. How did the Second World War and the Holocaust have an impact on Canadian immigration policies and attitudes towards accepting immigrants into Canadian society?
3. How have Canada's immigration system and public attitudes evolved since the Jewish immigrants featured in the activity were trying to come to Canada?

Origins and Citizenship: The History of a Canadian Ethnic Group, Grade 11 (CHE3O)

1. What are some social, political, and economic factors that might influence a person's decision to immigrate to a different country today? How are they similar/ different to the Jewish immigrants featured in the activity?
2. How do personal biases, myths, and social attitudes affect an immigrant's experiences in Canada today? How are they similar/ different to the experiences of Jewish immigrants featured in the activity?
3. What are some of the cultural and social trends that have emerged within Canadian society as a result of Jewish immigration to Canada? How could these trends help build a sense of community for Jewish Canadians?

Canada: History, Identity, and Culture, Grade 12 (CH14U)

1. How has the idea of "Canadian identity" changed/ evolved with the increase of immigration to the country?

2. How did both the amended Immigration Acts of 1919 and 1952 impact Jewish immigration to Canada?
3. How has the increase in immigration impacted Canadian identity? What does it mean to be a Canadian today? Use the case studies in the activity as reference.

Glossary

While exploring the website and completing, students may encounter unfamiliar terms. Here are some of the most common terms used in the *In Search of Better Days* exhibit. You can find the full glossary on the website.

Antisemitism

Hostility toward or hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group, often accompanied by social, economic, or political discrimination.

Canadian Jewish Congress

A democratically elected organization representing Jewish Canadians. During its years of operation from 1919 and 2011, the CJC advocated for Jewish rights. For example, the CJC lobbied the Government of Canada after World War II to allow Jewish refugees into the country. Following reorganization in 2011, the CJC disbanded with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) taking on the CJC's responsibilities.

Displaced Persons Camps

Facilities for housing displaced persons after World War II. Displaced Persons were citizens or refugees from other countries who were unable to return to their homes.

Internment

The imprisonment of groups of people from enemy countries during wartime. Internees were confined in internment camps without being charged with a crime. Instead, they were often confined because of suspected connections to an enemy country.

Shoah

A Hebrew word meaning catastrophe used to refer to the Holocaust, the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945.

Tailor Project

The first of the immigration schemes targeting garment workers beginning in 1947. Driven by labour shortages in Canada, the Tailor Project worked around Canada's restrictive immigration policies. The Project team recruited Jewish tailors from DP Camps in Europe to work and live in Canada.

War Orphan Project

An immigration scheme that allowed orphaned Jewish Holocaust survivors under 18 to immigrate to Canada. The Project began in 1947 when the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) convinced the Government of Canada to allow these survivors to enter Canada. Between 1947 and 1952, over one thousand orphans immigrated to Canada.

Further Resources

Please consult the following resources for more information regarding how to teach students about the Holocaust and refugees, as well as how to effectively engage students using primary sources.

“Tools and Resources.” Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

<https://www.holocaustcentre.com/tools-and-resources>

- The “Tools and Resources” section of the Neuberger’s website highlights the transformative learning experiences that emerge from teaching students about the Holocaust. It also features lesson plans for teaching students about the Holocaust and further resources that highlight the importance of teaching Canadian students about the Holocaust.

“Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust.” International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/educational-materials/ihra-recommendations-teaching-and-learning-about-holocaust>

- This resource published by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) explores why, what, and how you should teach your students about the Holocaust. It includes key arguments to support teaching the Holocaust, some foundational background information, and approaches to follow when teaching.

“Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust.” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust>

- These guidelines, published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, outline approaches appropriate for teaching audiences of all ages about the Holocaust. It provides 10 recommendations for teaching about the Holocaust in a way that reflects the sensitivity and complexity of the topic while providing a well-rounded understanding for audiences.

“Teaching About Refugees Guidebook for Teachers.” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

<https://www.unhcr.org/618bc1d64>

- The UN Refugee Agency’s Guidebook explores why you should teach your students about refugees and pedagogical approaches for doing so. It provides 6 scaffolded steps for building your students’ knowledge about refugees.

“Engaging Students with Primary Sources.” Smithsonian Institution

<https://historyexplorer.si.edu/sites/default/files/PrimarySources.pdf>

- This resource, published by the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, outlines the purpose and use of primary sources efficiently in the classroom. It highlights various types of primary sources such as documents, photographs, oral testimonies, and objects, and how they can be used as educational tools.

If you have any further questions or need further support, please email education@thethm.org for more information.

Appendix 1: Student Activity Worksheets

See the end of this Teacher Guide for the worksheets or visit the *In Search of Better Days* website.

Appendix 2: Extended Learning Activities

Students can build on their work with the Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheet. Here are three ways you can extend your students' learning.

1. Map a Migration Story

Students will select one survivor's story to follow throughout the *In Search of Better Days* website. Watching the clips from the survivor's testimony, students will gather information about the survivor's migration experiences. Student will demonstrate this journey visually, either on paper or using the [National Geographic MapMaker](#).

2. Research an Organization

Students will select and research an organization mentioned in the *In Search of Better Days* website. Possible organizations include the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). Students should note the supports available to Jewish refugees, and they can compare these to what is available to refugees in Canada today.

3. Share a Survivor's Story

Working with others who listened to the same survivor's testimony in another section of the *In Search of Better Days* website, students will share and use their completed Survivor Testimony Discovery Worksheets to piece together the survivor's story. Students will represent the survivor's story visually (e.g., a timeline) or in writing (e.g., a biography) and present it to the class.

Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions About the Holocaust

1. What was the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators.

a. *When did the Holocaust begin and end?*

The Holocaust refers to the period from January 30, 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, to May 8, 1945 (V-E Day), the end of the Second World War in Europe.

b. *What does the word Holocaust mean?*

The word Holocaust comes from the ancient Greek: *olos* meaning "whole," and *kaustos*, or *kautos*, meaning "burnt." Originating as early as the fifth century B.C.E., the term can mean a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire or a great destruction of life, especially by fire.

While the word Holocaust, with the meaning of a burnt sacrificial offering, does not have a specifically religious connotation, it appeared widely in religious writings through the centuries, particularly in descriptions of pagan rituals involving burnt sacrifices. In secular writings, Holocaust most commonly came to mean "a complete or whole destruction."

c. *What does the word Shoah mean?*

By the late 1940s, Holocaust became a more specific term due to its use in Hebrew translations of the word *Shoah*. This Hebrew word, meaning "calamity" or "destruction," had been used throughout Jewish history to refer to assaults upon Jews, but by the 1940s it was frequently being applied to the Nazi murder of European Jewry.

d. *What is genocide?*

Genocide is the intentional destruction of a group of people based on ethnic, national, racial, or religious reasons. The term is a combination of the Greek word γένος meaning "race, people" with the Latin suffix *-caedo* meaning "act of killing." The term was first coined in 1944.

2. Where did the Holocaust occur?

The Holocaust affected people in every country in Europe. However, the Holocaust itself took place in Nazi-occupied countries across Europe. These countries included Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, former Yugoslavia, and Greece. Victims of the Holocaust were primarily murdered in concentration camps and ghettos located in Poland, or in shooting operations in the Baltic states and the USSR (present-day Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia). Jews from other Nazi-occupied countries such as Romania, Croatia and Hungary were also persecuted by local military forces or were transported to concentration camps.

3. What does "The Final Solution" mean?

The term "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" refers to the Nazi plan to murder all the Jews of Europe. The term was codified at the Wannsee Conference (Berlin: January 20, 1942) where Nazi officials devised its implementation. Thousands of Jews were murdered by the Nazis during the initial years of the Third Reich. The systematic murder of Jews, or the "Final Solution," began as a result of the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 when the Nazis encountered large numbers of "Eastern" Jews. When mass shootings became inefficient, the establishment of killing centers or death camps became the mechanism to carry out the Final Solution.

4. Who are Jews?

Being a Jew is about religion and culture. A Jew is a person who identifies as part of the cultural group whose traditional religion is Judaism.

The perpetrators of the Holocaust defined a Jew in an extremely racialized way. On November 14, 1935, the Nazis issued the following definition of a Jew:

- Three Jewish grandparents
- Two Jewish grandparents who belonged to the Jewish community on September 15, 1935, or joined thereafter
- Married to a Jew on September 15, 1935, or thereafter
- Offspring of a marriage or extramarital liaison with a Jew on or after September 15, 1935.

Those who were not classified as Jews but who had some Jewish ancestry were categorized as *mischlinge* (hybrids.) They were officially excluded from membership in the Nazi Party. Although they were drafted into the German Army, they could not attain the rank of officers. They were also barred from the civil service and from certain professions.

During the Second World War, first-degree *mischlinge* were incarcerated in concentration camps and were deported to death camps. They were divided into two groups:

- Mischlinge of the first degree: two Jewish grandparents.
- Mischlinge of the second degree: one Jewish grandparent.

5. Who were the other victims of the Nazis?

People with mental and physical disabilities and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi Germany.

The Nazis carried out a second, concurrent genocide during the Holocaust. This was against the Roma and Sinti ("Gypsy" people). This event is often termed *Samudaripen*, meaning the murder of all, or collective murder. Another term you might encounter when reading about the Roma genocide is *Porajmos*, literally meaning "devouring."

6. Who were the perpetrators and why did so many people collaborate in the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was conceived of, developed, and executed by the Nazi-German regime led by Adolf Hitler. It was implemented in large part by officers of the Schutzstaffel, known as the SS. The SS were the elite guard of the Nazi regime that controlled the German state and the territories conquered by the Nazis. They were tasked with carrying out the Nazi ideological agenda in Germany and its conquered territories throughout Europe. Civilian and organizational collaborators and accomplices from across Nazi-occupied Europe also helped to carry out the Nazi's agenda.

7. Who were the bystanders?

A bystander is a "witness to events," or someone who is "present but not taking part in what is occurring." During the Second World War, many German citizens and those in German-occupied countries knew what was happening to Jews across Europe but remained passive and indifferent. After the war, many claimed that they were "not involved" in the persecution of Jews and that they were merely "bystanders" to what happened during the Holocaust.

Despite knowing about violence against Jews since 1933, North American leaders did not call upon the local population in Europe to refrain from assisting the Nazis in their systematic murder of the Jews.

8. Why did the Holocaust happen and why were Jews targeted?

Hitler's ultimate goal in launching the Second World War and the Holocaust was the establishment of an Aryan empire from Germany to the Ural Mountains. He considered this area the natural territory of the German people, an area to which they were entitled by right, the *Lebensraum* (living space) for the Aryan race to preserve itself and assure its dominance. In the end, Hitler's program of war and genocide stemmed from what he saw as a hard equation of survival: "Aryan" Germans would have to expand and dominate, a process requiring the elimination of all racial threats—especially the Jews—or else they would face extinction themselves.

The explanation of the Nazis' hatred of Jews rests on their distorted world view which saw history as a racial struggle. They considered the Jews a race with the goal of world domination and who, therefore, were an obstruction to Aryan dominance. They considered it their duty to eliminate the threat of Jews.

There is no doubt that other factors contributed toward Nazi hatred of the Jews and their contrived image of the Jewish people. These included the centuries-old tradition of Christian antisemitism which propagated a negative stereotype of the Jew as a Christ-killer, agent of the devil, and practitioner of witchcraft. Also significant was the political antisemitism of the latter half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries, which singled out the Jew as a threat to the established order of society. These combined to paint the Jew as a target for persecution and ultimate destruction by the Nazis.

9. What is Antisemitism?

The word antisemitism means prejudice against or hatred of Jews. The Holocaust is history's most extreme example of antisemitism.

In 1879, German journalist Wilhelm Marr coined the term antisemitism, denoting the hatred of Jews, and also hatred of various liberal, cosmopolitan, and international political trends often associated with Jews. Among the most common manifestations of antisemitism throughout history were pogroms, violent riots launched against Jews and frequently encouraged by government authorities.

In the modern era, antisemites added a political dimension to their ideology of hatred. In the late nineteenth century, antisemitic political parties were formed in Germany, France, and Austria. Publications such as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion generated or provided support for fraudulent theories of an international Jewish conspiracy. A potent component of political antisemitism was nationalism, whose adherents often falsely denounced Jews as disloyal citizens.

The Nazi party, founded in 1919 and led by Adolf Hitler, gave political expression to quasi-scientific racial theories influenced by Darwinism. In part, the German Nazi party gained popularity in Germany and Austria by disseminating anti-Jewish propaganda. Millions bought Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle – published in 1925), which called for the removal of Jews from Germany.

With the Nazi rise to power in 1933, the party ordered anti-Jewish economic boycotts, staged book burnings, and enacted discriminatory anti-Jewish legislation. In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws racially defined Jews by blood and ordered the total separation of so-called "Aryans" and "non-Aryans," thereby legalizing a racist hierarchy and denial of civil rights to Jews in Germany. The pogroms of Kristallnacht in Germany and Austria in November 1938 marked a transition to an era of destruction, in which genocide would become the singular focus of Nazi antisemitism.

10. What did the world know about the Holocaust while it was happening?

While the entire German population was not in agreement with Hitler's persecution of the Jews, there is no evidence of any large-scale protest regarding their treatment. Among German Christian clergy, the response was mixed. Some publicly protested the Nazi Euthanasia program but were silent on the treatment of Jews.

Though intelligence data and news reports revealed Nazi violence against Jews as early as 1933, and a dramatic increase in that violence in 1941, scholars generally agree that the United States government and the Allies did not receive reliable confirmation of the full scope of the Nazis' Final Solution until August 1942. However, no attempt was made to call upon the local population in Europe to refrain from assisting the Nazis in their systematic murder of the Jews.

The response of the Allies to the persecution and destruction of European Jewry was inadequate. Tens of thousands of Jews sought to enter the United States and Canada, but they were barred from doing so by stringent immigration policies. Even the relatively small

quotas of visas which existed were often not filled, although the number of applicants was usually many times the number of available places. Only in January 1944 was an agency established for the express purpose of saving the victims of Nazi persecution. On December 17, 1942, The War Refugee Board issued a condemnation of Nazi atrocities against the Jews, but this was the only such declaration made prior to 1944.

11. Did anyone resist during Holocaust?

There were Germans and civilians in German-occupied countries who defied boycotts or aided Jews in escape and hiding, but their numbers were very low. Some supported Hitler for a variety of nationalist reasons while not necessarily advocating the Final Solution, and some opposed Hitler's leadership but were nevertheless in agreement with his anti-Jewish policies.

Many Jews also partook in spiritual and physical resistance against Nazi perpetrators. Spiritual resistance refers to attempts by individuals to maintain their humanity and core values in spite of Nazi dehumanization and degradation. In many instances, Jews in ghettos and camps continued observing religious traditions, provided schooling for the children, maintained cultural activities and communal life, and documented the experience in writing and art. Physical resistance refers to armed resistance. Despite difficult conditions, many Jews engaged in armed resistance against the Nazis in three basic types: ghetto revolts, resistance in concentration and death camps, and partisan warfare.

- Ghetton: The Warsaw Ghetto revolt, which began on April 19, 1943, is the best-known example of armed Jewish resistance, but there were many ghetto revolts in which Jews fought against the Nazis.
- Camps: Despite the terrible conditions in the death, concentration, and labour camps, Jewish inmates fought against the Nazis at the following sites: Treblinka (August 2, 1943); Babi Yar (September 29, 1943); Sobibor (October 14, 1943); Janowska (November 19, 1943); and Auschwitz (October 7, 1944).
- Partisans: Partisans were groups of organized guerilla fighters operating in enemy-occupied territory. The work of these fighters led to the rescue of an undetermined number of Jews, Nazi casualties, and damage to German property and moral.

12. Did anyone help the victims?

There are a small number of Germans and citizens in Nazi-occupied countries that tried to help Jews during the Holocaust, called the "Righteous among the Nations," or "Righteous Gentiles." Help came in many different forms. Some people defied laws and continued to sell goods to Jews or helped Jews to obtain illegal documentation papers while others hid Jews in their homes. This came with great risk because it was illegal to help Jews in any way and if caught, they would be arrested or even executed. There were Righteous Among the Nations in every country overrun or allied with the Nazis, and their deeds often led to the rescue of Jewish lives.

Yad Vashem, the Israeli national remembrance authority for the Holocaust, bestows special honors upon these individuals. By the end of 2010, Yad Vashem recognized 23,788 Righteous among the Nations from 45 countries. The figure is far from complete as many cases were never reported.

13. What happened to the perpetrators after the Holocaust?

After the end of the Second World War, many top-ranking Nazi perpetrators and collaborators were put on trial for the crimes that they committed during the Holocaust.

While many of them were convicted, most of the perpetrators were set free in the 1950s. The majority of those who actively participated in the persecution of Jews did not pay for their crimes. Some changed their identities and fled Europe, but many were able to live their lives like they did before the war openly. Many people did not think that this was right, so they began to seek out perpetrators and bring them to trial for their crimes. Holocaust perpetrators are still being brought to trial for their war crimes to this day.

For more information about the Holocaust, take a look at these resources:

- “Facts About The Holocaust,” *World Jewish Congress*, <https://aboutholocaust.org/en>.
- “The Holocaust Encyclopedia,” The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/en>.