

EXPLORING THE HOLOCAUST HOME LEARNING PACK

INTRODUCTION

These seven activities are adapted from our *Exploring the Holocaust* cross-curricular lesson resources for Key Stage 3 and S2. The original resources can be found at www.het.org.uk/exploring-the-holocaust-menu. We have produced these revised versions for teachers to send to students who are studying at home.

A NOTE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

The resources in these activities, like our full scheme of work, are free to download. For students without internet access, teachers will need to print out this pack and the resources mentioned in each activity plan. Some activities include short film clips, but can be completed without them. We anticipate that each activity will take between 45 minutes and 1 hour. We recommend that lessons be completed in the following order:

- *Defining the Holocaust*
- *Pre-war Jewish Life*
- *Ghettos*
- *Dilemmas, Choices and Responses during the Holocaust*
- *Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust*
- *Rebuilding Lives*
- End of Unit Project

The activities enable students to explore the experiences of Jewish people before, during and after the Holocaust. This reflects internationally-recognised principles for teaching about the Holocaust: see pp. 7-8 of the *Exploring the Holocaust Teachers' Guide*, downloadable at [www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Exploring the Holocaust Teachers Guide.pdf](http://www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Exploring_the_Holocaust_Teachers_Guide.pdf). In keeping with this guidance, the resources contain no graphic imagery, the learning activities are meaningful, and students have the opportunity to explore the testimonies and stories of real individuals.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you wish to support your child with these activities, the original classroom materials are downloadable for free from our website; links are at the bottom of each activity plan. These were designed for classes of 30 students, led by a teacher, and are written as lesson plans. You may find the following sections of use:

- Introduction
- Conceptual understanding
- Further information about any images and case studies

These will help you to find answers to many of your child's questions. If you or your child have any further questions as they are working through the tasks, feel free to get in touch. You can email us at info@het.org.uk, tweet us at @HolocaustUK or call us on (0)20 7222 6822.

DEFINING THE HOLOCAUST

INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively study the Holocaust, it is important to understand what the term means. In this first activity we will consider that, whilst there are different versions of a definition of the Holocaust, they all have certain things in common. By the end of this session, we hope you will be able to confidently talk about the common features of these different definitions, but also realise that definitions themselves do little to explain the complexity of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust is not a simple subject, and as you study it you might find you come away with more questions than answers. This is absolutely fine and we encourage you to think about these questions as you work through all of the activities to come.

Ideally a definition of the Holocaust would give some indication of a response to important questions such as:

- Who were the victims?
- Who were the perpetrators?
- When did this happen?
- Where did this happen?
- How did it happen?
- Why did this happen?

Answering these questions in a short definition is very difficult. One historically accurate and academically acceptable definition that the Holocaust Educational Trust uses is:

The Holocaust was the murder of approximately six million Jewish men, women and children by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during the Second World War.

Whilst this does not respond to all of the questions above, a historian would accept it as a valid definition, even if not a perfect one. In the coming activities you will explore these questions and discover some of the complexities of the Holocaust – complexities which make any definition seem inadequate. By exploring the definition we can ensure a common understanding of precisely what we are referring to and find some clues and develop our enquiry further.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE TERM 'HOLOCAUST'?

The word 'Holocaust' comes from ancient Greek: '*holos*' means 'completely' and '*kaustos*' means 'burnt'. The word was first used to describe religious sacrifices. For this reason, some people have objected to the term 'Holocaust' and prefer to use the Hebrew word 'Shoah', which means 'catastrophe'.

The term 'Holocaust' means different things to different people. However, there are several key themes that run through any definition of the word. On the next page are three definitions of what the Holocaust was. Each has been written by an institution that helps to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust.

TASK 1

Complete the following tasks based on the definitions below:

- Read through the definitions and underline any terms or phrases they have in common. (You may need to look up any new words you find.)
- What conclusions can you draw from the common language within each definition?
- Consider, do we need one single definition of the Holocaust or is it ok that these definitions are not exactly the same? Why is this the case?

When you have completed this task, have a look at the information on page 4.

Definitions of the Holocaust



“The Holocaust was the systematic murder of Europe’s Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Second World War. For the first time in history, industrial methods were used for the mass extermination of a whole people. Between 1933 and 1945, Jews were targeted for discrimination, segregation and extermination. [...] The Nazis enslaved and murdered millions of others as well. Political opponents, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), homosexuals, prisoners of conscience, people with physical and mental disabilities, Poles, Soviet prisoners of war and others were killed or died in camps as a result of neglect, starvation or disease.”

Imperial War Museum, London, UK

“The Holocaust was the murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators. Between the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941 and the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, Nazi Germany and its accomplices strove to murder every Jew under their domination. Because Nazi discrimination against the Jews began with Hitler’s accession to power in January 1933, many historians consider this the start of the Holocaust era. The Jews were not the only victims of Hitler’s regime, but they were the only group that the Nazis sought to destroy entirely.”



Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Israel



“The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also targeted other groups because of their perceived “racial inferiority”: Roma (Gypsies), the disabled, and some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others). Other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioural grounds, among them Communists, Socialists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and homosexuals.”

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., USA

WHAT ABOUT PERSECUTION AND MURDER OF OTHER GROUPS DURING THIS TIME?

You will notice that the Holocaust Educational Trust's definition, and the other ones you have just studied, refer to the Holocaust as a specific act (or series of acts) against Jewish people. You might know that the Nazis also persecuted people from other minority groups. These groups included Roma/Sinti (sometimes referred to as 'Gypsies'), people with disabilities, political opponents, homosexuals, Black people, Jehovah's Witnesses and others. So you might wonder why they are not considered as victims of the Holocaust.

As the definition from Yad Vashem tells us, Jewish people "*were the only group that the Nazis sought to destroy entirely*". This is why we have the phrase 'The Holocaust' to describe what happened to Jewish people during the Second World War. However, it is also essential to recognise what happened to each of the groups mentioned above. Each of these groups was persecuted for different reasons and in different ways. Some were treated in ways similar to Jewish people, but the reasons for such actions may not have been the same. You can learn more about other victims of Nazi persecution by reading our information sheet, downloadable at www.het.org.uk/images/home-learning//Holocaust_definition_and_commentary.pdf.

When we learn about the Holocaust, it is really important that we humanise everyone involved. This means, when we look at the different groups who were persecuted, we must explore who they were and why they were treated this way. To include all people under one term does little justice to any of their stories.

SUMMARY

Whilst there are a range of definitions of the Holocaust, what is commonly understood by all is that it was an attempt to murder every Jewish person the Nazis could find, and that approximately six million (including 1.5 million children) suffered this fate. However, reading and comparing definitions does not really broaden our understanding of what the Holocaust was, how, when or why it happened. Therefore, it is essential that we go deeper in our enquiry to develop our understanding. That's what you're going to do through the next activities.

At this stage you may have more questions than answers – that is not just fine, it's actually a good thing! It means that you want to know more and through the activities which follow you will be able to develop your knowledge and understanding to be able to answer some of those questions.

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the activity on *Pre-War Jewish Life* which can be found on page 5.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about how the Holocaust is defined and the experiences of different victim groups of Nazism are discussed, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Defining.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

PRE-WAR JEWISH LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this activity is to find out more about the Jewish people who lived in Europe before the Second World War. This is important because, in later activities, you're going to find out what happened to Jewish communities when they came under the control of the Nazis and their collaborators in the 1930s and 1940s. You have read a little bit about this in your last activity, *Defining the Holocaust*.

For this activity you will need:

- A collection of photographs of pre-war Jewish life which can be found at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Pre-war_cards.pdf. You can look at these online or print them out.
- A pen and paper.

TASK 1

Look through photographs 1 – 15. They all show Jewish people living in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. Read the information about each picture, too. Then:

- Make a list of all the countries where these Jewish people were living. There were Jewish people in every country in Europe, including the United Kingdom, so we have included pictures from only a selection of communities.
- Write 3 sentences about things which interested you as you first looked at the photographs.

TASK 2

Answer the questions in bullet points. Aim for 3 per question. These will help you with Task 3.

- What sort of situations do the photographs show? (*Think about different activities the Jewish people are taking part in. These include sport, religion, work, school and many others. Try to find some activities which you have taken part in and others which you have not.*)
- How did these Jewish people express their identity? (*Some Jewish religious identity is evident in photographs 2 and 7. How can we tell that these people are Jewish? Political identity is shown in photographs 11 and 12. What did the Bund members and the Zionist youth group believe in and how were these beliefs different? Also, look for examples of 'secular' or non-religious identity in photographs 1, 3 and 6.*)
- What other identities can you see being demonstrated by the Jewish people around Europe? (*Photograph 4 tells us that some Jewish people were patriotic and had a strong national identity. Can you see why? Try to find examples of the influence of age, beliefs, gender, jobs and interests influenced who these Jewish people were.*)

- Overall, what do the cards show about diversity of Jewish life in Europe before WW2? (*Look for evidence that the Jewish population of Europe was made up of diverse communities and, although they shared some aspects of their Judaism, they were all individual.*)

TASK 3

Use your responses to Tasks 1 and 2 to answer to the question ‘Who were the Jewish people of Europe before the Second World War?’

Either:

- Challenge yourself to come up with your own structure for your answer. Remember to have clear topic sentences or paragraph starters and to include examples to prove your points.

or

- Use these sentence starters to help you:
 - Before the Second World War, Jewish people lived all over Europe. For example . . .
 - Like everyone else in Europe, Jewish people were many things. Some were Some worked as Others were / liked to . . . This shows that . . .
 - Some Jewish people were quite religious and Others were not so religious and This is important because . . .
 - Being Jewish was only ever one part of who someone was. I would describe the Jewish community of Europe, before the Second World War as . . . and . . . and . . .

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the activity on *Ghettos* which can be found on page 7.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about each of the photographs, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Pre-war_Jewish_Life.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

GHETTOS

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this activity is to find out more about what life was like for Jewish people who were forced, by the Nazis and their collaborators, to live in ghettos. We recommend you do this activity only after you have completed the activities on *Defining the Holocaust* and *Pre-war Jewish Life*.

For this activity you will need:

- A pen and paper.
- This short film clip: www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Clips/Schindlers_List_clip.mp4.¹
- A collection of resources about different ghettos during the Holocaust which can be found at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Ghettos_cards.pdf. You can look at these online or print them out.

STARTER

Think about whether you have heard or read the word 'ghetto' before. If you have, write down what the word makes you think of. If you have not, don't worry – you'll be finding out about ghettos in this activity.

TASK 1

Watch the film clip (www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Clips/Schindlers_List_clip.mp4) if you can. If you are not able to, go to the information at the start of Task 2. The clip is from *Schindler's List*, a film adaptation of a novel based on real events. It shows a conversation between a group of Jewish people in the ghetto in Kraków, a city in Poland which was occupied by Nazi Germany during the Second World War. Watch it twice, the first time without making any notes. Watch it the second time to look for the following information:

- What do you notice most of the Jewish people were wearing? Why might this be?
- What were conditions like in the ghetto? How can you tell?
- What had happened to the Jewish people before they were forced into the ghetto? (How did they get there and what had they already lost before making that journey?)

TASK 2

The clip showed that ghettos were areas of cities in which Jewish people were forced to live. (More than 1000 ghettos were set up in Europe during the Second World War.) In the clip, one character said that they were "*living behind walls*". Before being sent to the ghetto, the characters told us, they had lost their homes

¹ This clip has been made possible with the permission and support of the Film Distributors' Association (www.launchingfilms.com).

and businesses. They had no money and few possessions, not much food and hardly any fuel to heat their homes, so they were keeping warm in the street. Notice also that they were forced to wear an armband marked with a Star of David (a traditional Jewish symbol) to label them as different from other people. Now look through the resources at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Ghettos_cards.pdf, which tell you about different ghettos found somewhere in Europe during the Second World War. As you read the cards, answer these questions in bullet points:

- In which parts of Europe were ghettos located? (*List the countries. You will notice that they were in eastern and central Europe. None were in Germany.*)
- What can we tell about what life was like in ghettos? (*Look in the testimonies on the right-hand side of each card to help you. Find evidence of overcrowding, hunger, illness, fear and sadness. Make a note of anything else which interests you.*)
- Are there any differences between the ghettos described on these cards? (*Which had the largest and smallest population? Which existed for the longest and which for the shortest time? How were Jewish people kept inside ghettos: some ghettos had walls, but how else were they imprisoned?*)

TASK 3

Write an explanation of what you have learned about the ghettos by completing this activity.

Either:

Write an explanation of your understanding of the term 'ghetto' and how it has developed through this activity. Use examples and quotations to demonstrate the key points you want to convey.

Or

Use the following questions to help structure your writing:

- Did you know what ghettos were before you started this task? If so, what did you think they were?
- How would you describe ghettos now?
- What have you learned about what it was like to have to live in a ghetto?
- What is the most important thing you have learned about the ghettos?

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the activity on *Dilemmas, Choices and Responses to the Holocaust* which can be found on page 9.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about each of the ghettos, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Ghettos.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

DILEMMAS, CHOICES AND RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST

INTRODUCTION

We recommend you do this activity only after you have completed the activities on *Defining the Holocaust*, *Pre-war Jewish Life* and *Ghettos*.

For this activity you will need:

- A pen and paper
- *Dilemmas, Choices and Responses* cards which can be found at: www.het.org.uk/images/home-learning/Dilemmas_cards.pdf.
- An additional information sheet which can be found at: www.het.org.uk/images/home-learning/Dilemmas_additional_information.pdf.

This lesson encourages you to explore the complex factors which made the Holocaust happen by looking at the actions of a wide range of people who in very different ways faced moral choices during the Nazi era. In so doing, we encourage you to avoid judgements about human behaviour which group people into simple categories like 'good' and 'bad'.

So, as you work through this lesson hopefully you will increase your knowledge and understanding of a range of responses to events of the Holocaust. From this you'll be able to reflect on the typical categories used to classify those who were involved in the Holocaust and think about how useful they really are. You are encouraged to engage with the moral dilemmas and complexities of the events through this activity. By doing so you might find the tasks a little frustrating, as they play with the idea of simplifying a complex event.

With lots of the tasks in this activity, you'll not do much writing. There's lots to think about, though, and no easy answers. So, it's ok if you haven't written very much until the final task. Don't worry if you find it challenging – it's meant to be that way! We hope you also find it enjoyable and enlightening.

STARTER

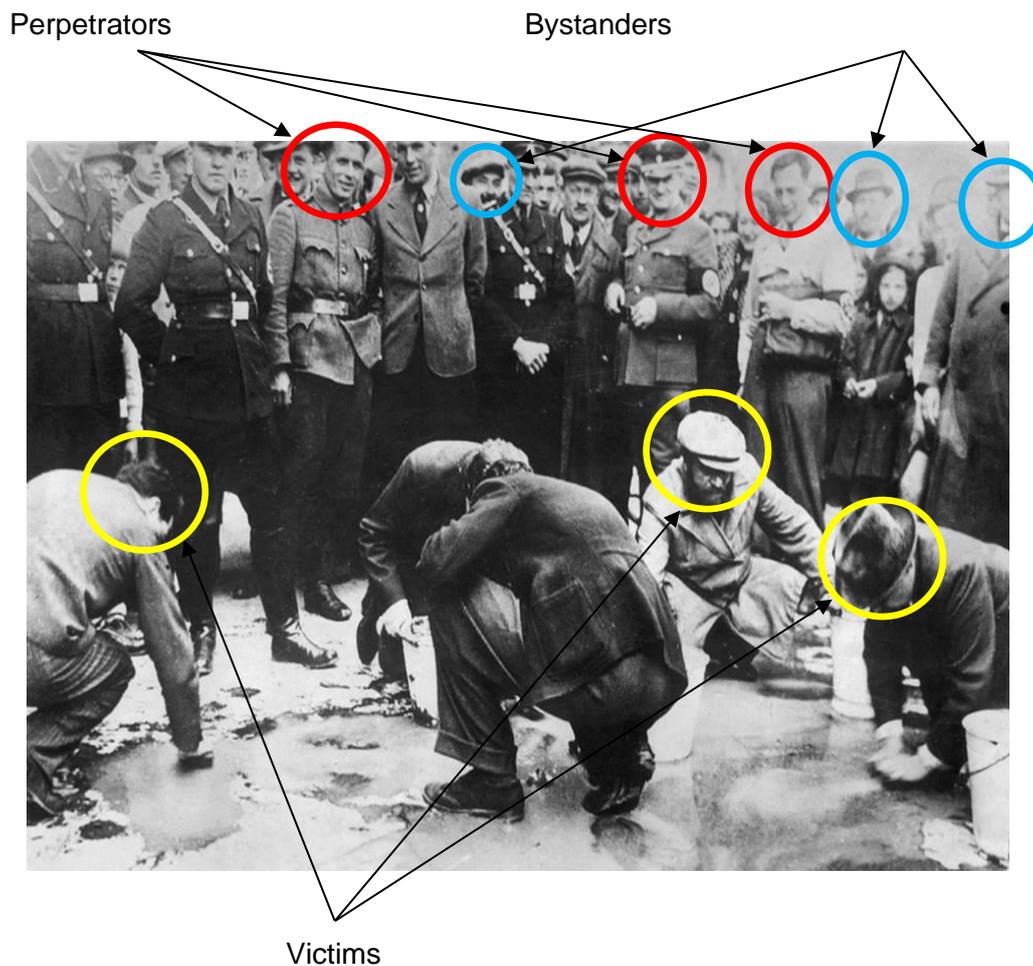
Look at the picture below. It was taken in Vienna, Austria in 1938 and shows Jewish men being forced to scrub the street clean following the German invasion of the country. This kind of activity was designed to humiliate Jews and was not done for any other reason. We can see that the 'event' has drawn a crowd.



Certain terms are often used to categorise the behaviour of different people during the Holocaust.

Perpetrator	The person doing an injustice to someone else.
Victim	The person who is the target of an injustice.
Bystander	The person watching an injustice being done and doing nothing to stop it.
Resister	The person who sees an injustice being done and tries to stop it.

This photograph seems to show examples of some of these types of behaviour (although there is no evidence of resister activity).



But is it always this simple, and is one category always enough to define a person by? Even in this photograph, we cannot be sure who organised the humiliation of the Jewish men or how many of the 'bystanders' took a more active role (e.g. shouting abuse, beating the men).

TASK 1

In the cards found at www.het.org.uk/images/home-learning/Dilemmas_cards.pdf, you will find 20 examples of actions by individuals or groups during the Holocaust. Each is a real example. Your task is to place each card into one of the following three categories depending on which one you think best suits the situation the card describes.

- Perpetrator
- Bystander
- Resister

You could make a table and just add the number for each example, like this:

Perpetrator	Bystander	Resister
e.g. 12		e.g. 13

Whilst some of the cards may seem fairly easy to categorise, you may find some much more challenging. Think about why this is the case.

- What would help you make your judgement?
- Do the cards always neatly fit into one category?
- Are there enough categories?
- What other categories might you add?
- Are there clear 'right' and 'wrong' answers to all these cards?
- If you can, try doing this activity with another person – do you agree on every card?

So perhaps the categories are a good starting point, but it is hard to simplify many of the situations to just one of three groups. Let's try something a little different...

TASK 2

This task is to place the cards along an opinion line. On a piece of paper draw a line and label it like this:

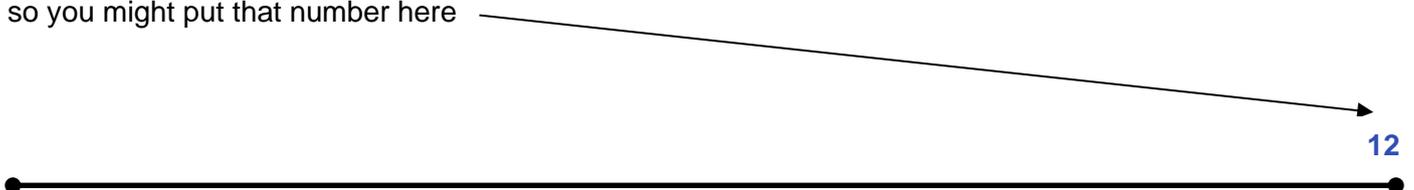


For each card decide if the example shows active or inactive behaviour, then put that card's number along the line in the appropriate place.

For example, card 12 is clearly a very active example,

**Joining an angry mob of civilians
in murdering a group of Jewish
townspeople, without any orders
to do so.**

so you might put that number here



Whereas card 10

Noticing long trains made up of cattle cars, full of people, passing your house but returning empty.

seems to show very little activity, just noticing something, so it might go here:

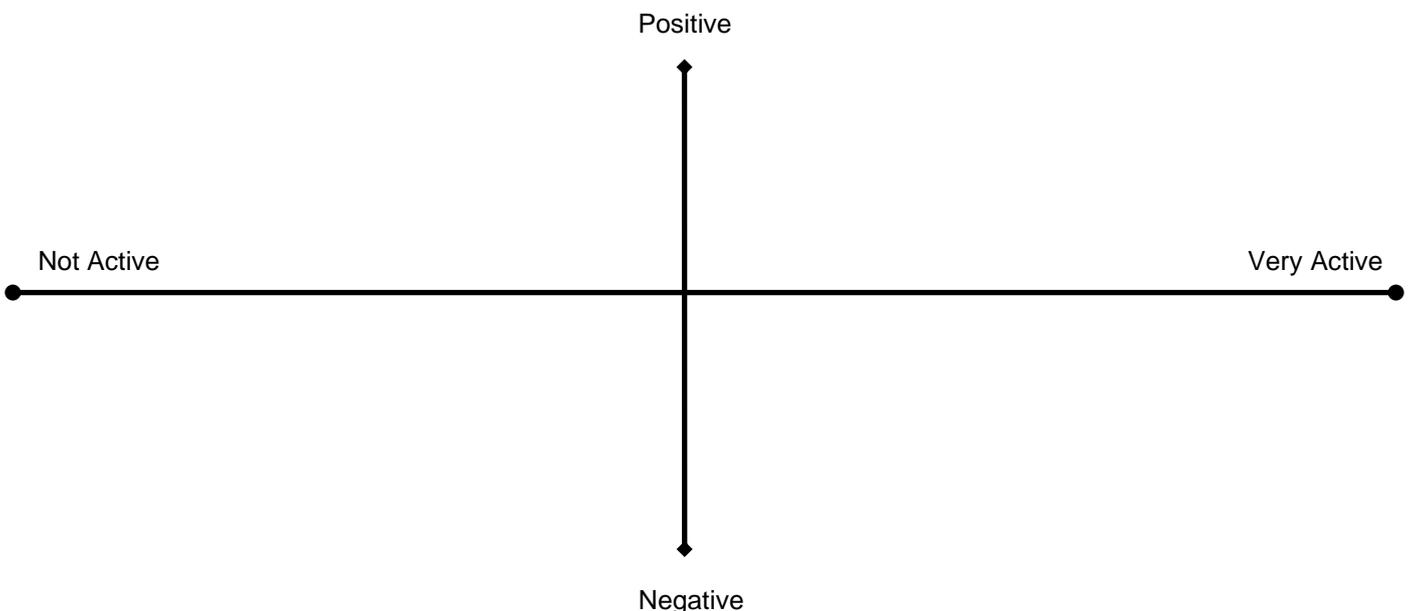
10

Now it's over to you to try and decide where the rest should go...

Was this an easy task? Think:

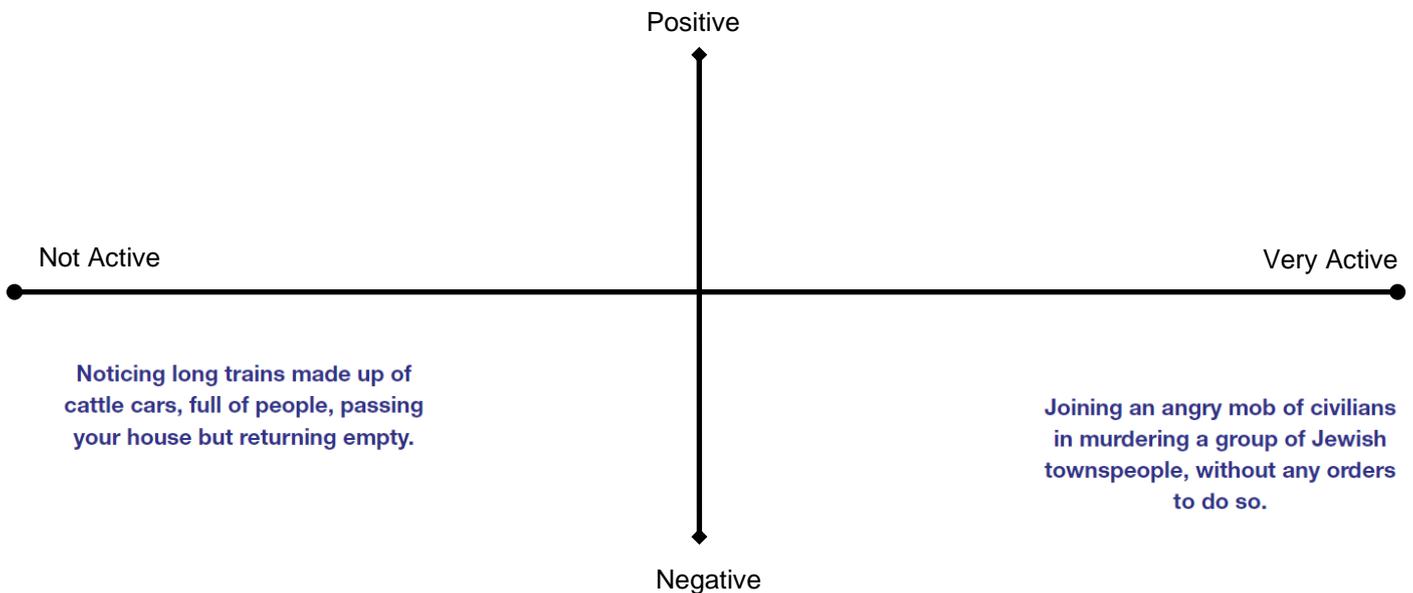
- What problems did you have deciding where to place the cards?
- Did you feel comfortable placing active/inactive resister behaviour right next to active/inactive perpetrator behaviour?
- Are there cards that don't seem to fit?
- Would another person agree with where you placed all the cards?

Now try organising the examples in one more way. This time you are going to draw a second line to create a grid like this:



You now need to look again at your cards and decide not just whether the responses described were passive or active, but also how far the actions were 'positive' or 'negative'. In other words, decide whether or not these actions helped Jews or made their situation worse. As you make your decisions, you should write the number of each example in the relevant quadrant depending on *how much* you think a response is positive/negative and active/inactive.

Here are two examples:



Now, consider the following questions:

- Did you find it easier to categorise the examples this way?
- Were there any sections without cards in them?
- It is likely that few cards will be found in the 'inactive'/'positive' quadrant. What might this tell us about bystander behaviour? Could bystander behaviour ever have positive results?

One thing that can help in making these decisions is further understanding of the examples themselves. If you like, you can see further information for each example in an additional document which can be found at www.het.org.uk/images/home-learning/Dilemmas_additional_information.pdf. This was originally created for teachers, but you may find it useful too.

PLENARY

By completing this activity, hopefully you will have begun to consider how simple categories that we use to define people and things rarely reflect their complexity. You will also have addressed some of the moral dilemmas, choices and responses people had to the events of the Holocaust.

Finally, read through the following questions (you will only have to write an answer to one):

- Why is it sometimes difficult to separate 'bystanders' from 'perpetrators' when looking at the events of the Holocaust?
- Were some people more responsible for the Holocaust than others?
 - A reasonable answer is yes. However, is this too simple?
 - Consider how the Holocaust was made possible by the actions of a great many people. Hitler and a small band of radical Nazis could not carry out the murder of six million Jewish

people, therefore the choices of 'ordinary' people – such as a German police reservist or a Lithuanian civilian – could mean the difference between life and death.

- What factors might explain why people acted as they did during the Holocaust?
 - There is a range of possible answers here, indicating that the Holocaust was made possible not merely by an ideology of hatred but also by very human factors such as greed, ambition, group pressure and indifference.

- Now **choose one of these questions** and write your own answer to it using at least three examples from the cards to support your point. Try using the following structure for your answer:
 - Point – what is it that you want to say
 - Evidence – pick (at least) three examples support your point
 - Explain – why these examples prove your point

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the activity on *Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust* which can be found on page 16.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about each of the tasks, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Dilemmas.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

JEWISH RESISTANCE DURING THE HOLOCAUST

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this activity is to explore some of the different ways in which Jewish people resisted their treatment by the Nazis and their collaborators. We recommend you do this activity only after you have completed the activities on *Defining the Holocaust*, *Pre-war Jewish life*, *Ghettos* and *Dilemmas*, *Choices and Responses to the Holocaust*.

For this activity you will need:

- A pen and paper
- Ten double-sided A4 cards, which can be found at: www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Resistance_cards.pdf. These can be printed out or studied online.

STARTER

Write down your own definition of the word 'resistance'. What does the word mean generally and what does it mean in the context of the Holocaust? What would resistance to the Holocaust look like?

TASK 1

Read this explanation of the word 'amidah'. Amidah is a Hebrew word. It does not have a perfect translation in English, but it means 'standing up against.' This explanation was written by historian Yehuda Bauer.

*"What does amidah include? It includes smuggling food into ghettos; mutual self-sacrifice within the family to avoid starvation or worse; cultural, educational, religious, and political activities taken to strengthen morale; the work of doctors, nurses, and educators to consciously maintain health and moral fibre to enable individual and group survival; and, of course, armed rebellion or the use of force."*²

Answer these questions:

- Does Bauer's explanation of amidah help you think about resistance in a different way? How?
- Choose three examples from Bauer's explanation of amidah and explain why each was an act of resistance.

TASK 2

Look through the cards at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Resistance_cards.pdf. Each tells you about a Jewish group or person who resisted their treatment. Draw a grid like the one below. Complete it in bullet points, aiming to write at least 2 points in each box. The first has been completed for you.

² Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 120.

Type of resistance	Photograph	How did this group or individual resist?
Armed resistance	<i>A bunker in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising</i>	<i>By fighting against the German forces to resist their deportation</i>
	<i>Survivors of the Sobibór uprising</i>	<i>By killing around 20 SS men and Ukrainian guards and escaping the camp.</i>
	<i>Jewish partisans in Vilna</i>	<i>They escaped the ghetto and used forests as a base to fight against the Germans.</i>
Rescue of other Jewish people		
Keeping records of Nazi crimes and Jewish experiences		
Continuing to take part in Jewish religious and cultural activities		

TASK 3

Use your grid to answer the following questions in full paragraphs. Aim to make your arguments clear and to use specific evidence and explanation to support each point.

- How did Jewish people resist during the Holocaust? (*Explain the different types of resistance mentioned in the grid. Consider which stories of resistance you found most interesting or surprising and explain why. Also consider what barriers Jewish people faced when trying to resist.*)
- Would you change your first definitions in the light of what they have learned? If so, how?
- Extension: Why do you think it is important to study Jewish resistance during the Holocaust? (*Think about what impression of Jewish people you might have if you studied stories of their persecution without considering their resistance as well.*)

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the activity on *Rebuilding Lives* which can be found on page 18.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about each story of resistance, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Resistance.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

REBUILDING LIVES

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this activity is to find out more about what life was like for Holocaust survivors after liberation, and how they managed to rebuild their lives. We recommend you do this activity only after you have completed the activities on *Defining the Holocaust*, *Pre-war Jewish Life*, *Ghettos*, *Dilemmas*, *Choices and Responses to the Holocaust* and *Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust*.

For this activity you will need:

- A pen and paper
- This short film: vimeo.com/56898216.
- Zigi Shipper's biography, which can be found at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Zigi_Shipper.pdf. You can look at this online.
- A collection of cards relating to Zigi's life after the Holocaust which can be found at: www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Zigi_cards.pdf. You can look at these online or print them out.

STARTER

Watch the short film clip (about 7 minutes) at vimeo.com/56898216.

TASK 1

Read through Zigi Shipper's biography at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Zigi_Shipper.pdf. From this and the video, think about the following questions. You don't have to write answers down, and if you do it can be in note form. Don't worry about getting the 'right' answer – you will be researching more about Zigi's life and experiences in these activities.

- How might Zigi have felt at the time he was liberated?
- What enabled him to survive?
- What challenges would he have faced at the end of the war?
- What would you have expected him to go on and do?

TASK 2

Look through the resources that can be found at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Zigi_cards.pdf. These cards all depict moments in Zigi's life and the pictures match with the event on the page before. Once you have read through them, answer these questions in bullet points:

- What are the key events of Zigi's post-war life?
- How do they relate to what you expected him to do?

TASK 3

On your paper, place the events from Zigi's life in an order that you think ranges from the most 'positive', 'good' or 'best' experience, to the most 'negative', 'bad' or 'worst'.

When you have completed this have a think about some of the following questions relating to the events and the order you placed them in. You do not have to write the answers down.

- How did Zigi's story compare to what you thought at the beginning of the activity?
- What can we learn from Zigi's story about what it was like to be a survivor in Britain?
- How has Zigi contributed to post-war British society?
- To what extent is it possible to use terms like 'good' and 'bad' or 'positive' or 'negative' in categorising people's experiences?
- What factors helped Zigi to rebuild his life?

TASK 4

Zigi's story implies the importance of hope and belief in something (not necessarily religion, as Zigi's case shows) in attempting to recover from such trauma. One reason why many survivors like Zigi have chosen to speak about their experiences is their belief that their testimony may have an impact on subsequent generations. Either as an extended piece of writing, or as reflective bullet points, answer the following question:

- What do you consider to be the most important message to emerge from the Holocaust? (*Use both the insights gained in this lesson and the previous activities you have completed.*)

When you have completed this activity, we would recommend you complete the End of Unit Project on which can be found on page 20.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

If you would like to read more about this activity, you can download a full lesson plan, with more information about each of the tasks, at www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Guidance_notes/Rebuilding_Lives.pdf. If you have any questions, call us on (0)20 7222 6822 or tweet us at @HolocaustUK.

END OF UNIT PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Now that you have completed these activities, we hope you have more understanding of the lives of Jewish people before, during and after the Holocaust. You explored some of the choices made by individuals which enabled the Holocaust to develop, as well as examples of how Jewish people resisted their persecution. Finally, you looked at the lives of survivors after the killings of the Holocaust were over. This final task is an opportunity for you to consider all that you learned throughout these activities.

TASK

Use your notes and the sources you have looked at throughout these activities, to complete **one** of these tasks. If you would like to do some additional research, there are some useful links on the next page.

Design your own exhibition entitled 'Exploring the Holocaust'

- Sketch your exhibition space on paper or on the computer. *You do not need to write all the text you would include but think about how your exhibition would be organised. Add labels and simple sketches to show your ideas.*
- Think about the visitors' experience. *What would you like them to learn, or think about?*
- Think about how your exhibition will be structured. *How will it begin and end? Will you organise your information by theme, by time, or using a different approach?*
- Reflect on which of the testimonies, stories and photographs you want to share. *Where will they appear in your exhibition? What ideas do you want them to convey?*

Design your own Holocaust memorial

- Sketch your memorial on paper or a device. You may find it useful to look at existing memorials – www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/How_Should_We_Remember_cards.pdf has examples of different types of Holocaust memorial.
- Think about why it is important to remember the Holocaust, and consider how you can represent the scale of the Holocaust (that approximately six million Jewish people, from all over Europe, were killed), and the fact that those six million people were all individuals.
- Think about what symbols, images and quotations you will include. *Which are most meaningful for you? Why? How can you incorporate them into your design?*

Write a review of a film you have watched or a book you have read which told a story about the Holocaust

- Think about how useful it is in informing people about the Holocaust. *Is it an accurate portrayal of what the Holocaust was really like? Does it tell a story of something which did happen? Does it tell a story of something which could have happened? Are there parts of the story which could help our understanding of what took place?*
- Consider how the film or book portrays its characters. *How are Jewish people depicted? How are the Nazis and/or collaborators portrayed? Are these portrayals useful? Are other people portrayed too? How are they depicted? Could this help our understanding of the events of the Holocaust?*
- Conclude on how accurate you think the film is now that you have studied the events. *Do you think it is useful for other students to watch it to learn something about the Holocaust?*

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

This final task is designed for students to complete when they have finished their *Exploring the Holocaust: Home Learning Pack* activities. We have designed each so that students *can* complete them using only their own notes and answers and the resources we have provided for each activity. We appreciate, however, that your child *may* want to conduct their own research to look for ideas or to find out more information.

We would advise against your child using a search engine to conduct their own research into the Holocaust. Doing so, even when using carefully framed questions, is likely to lead to their encountering graphic imagery. Such images can upset and desensitise students, dehumanise victims, and portray those who suffered in a light that would be recognisable to the perpetrators. For these reasons, we tend not to use such images in our teaching materials. Additionally, using a search engine to find out more about the Holocaust might also lead to your child encountering sites promoting Holocaust denial (discourse and propaganda that deny the historical reality and the extent of the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Second World War) which we do not want your child to encounter.

If your child would like to find out more as they complete their final tasks, we suggest that the resources listed below might be of use. These include some of our additional classroom resources and we have also included the details of a website which can be explored to find out more about the events of the Holocaust.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Kristallnacht_testimonies.pdf: these testimony extracts explore the events of 'Kristallnacht', the night of 9th–10th November 1938, when Jewish communities across Germany and Austria were attacked.

www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/British_Responses_cards.pdf: these case studies discuss the different ways in which people from the UK responded to Nazism and the Holocaust.

www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Final_Solution_cards.pdf: these cards explore what happened to the individuals and communities studied in the *Pre-War Jewish Life* activity, during the Holocaust.

www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Rescue_cards.pdf: these case studies tell you stories of people who rescued others during the Holocaust.

www.het.org.uk/images/downloads/Resources/Liberation_testimonies.pdf: these extracts of testimony explore the experience of 'liberation' at the end of the Second World War.

www.theholocaustexplained.org: *The Holocaust Explained* website is designed to help students and others understand the key contexts, causes, events and consequences of the Holocaust.