

Holocaust & Hidden Children

Time: 30-60 minutes

Audience: 4-5th grade

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Understand what the Holocaust was.
- Explain who Hidden Children were and what they experienced.
- Ask questions of interpretation within primary source documents.
- Analyze how childhood experiences and identities of Hidden Children differed.

Aligned Standards

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9

CA Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills

Research, Evidence, and Point of View (2): Students pose relevant questions about events they encounter in historical documents, eyewitness accounts, oral histories, letters, diaries, artifacts, photographs, maps, artworks, and architecture.

Context

Prior to beginning this lesson, students should understand what it means to be Jewish. For a list of common terms used within this lesson, go to the glossary at the end of the lesson.

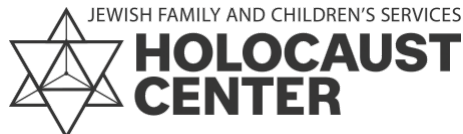
NOTE: Introducing sensitive topics to young children, such as the Holocaust, requires sensitivity to their level of emotional maturity and intellectual capacity. This lesson has been created with consultation from early childhood development experts with this in mind; however, please review and alter to fit the needs of your students. Additionally, the JFCS Holocaust Center team strongly recommends communication with families PRIOR to diving into sensitive topics with young children, providing families with clear expectations and supplemental resources.

Materials Needed

- [Google Slides](#)
- [KWL Chart](#)
- [Case Studies](#)

Lesson/Activity

1. This lesson begins with direct instruction centered around [Google Slides](#), and subsequently, uses those slides to guide activities and assignments throughout the lesson.
2. **Begin slide 1.** After opening the slides, begin by telling the students they will be learning about the Holocaust and Hidden Children.
3. **Transition to slide 2.** Pass out the [KWL Chart](#) and ask students to reflect on the first section: *What do you think you know about the Holocaust and Hidden Children?*



4. After giving students a few minutes to reflect and write, have them share their ideas with a peer group, and then, the whole class setting. As the students share out to the class, comprise a visual list of student knowledge.
5. Repeat the process for the second section on the KWL Chart: *What do you want to learn? What do you wonder about the the Holocaust and Hidden Children?*

Teaching Tip! As students learn about the things they are curious about throughout class, cross off/highlight this, coming back to the list the class created periodically. Students will feel more invested in the curriculum if they know their curiosity is driving the path the class is taking. Similarly, if there are many more things students are curious about at the end of class, use this as a jumping off point for an additional lesson or an extension assignment that gets students researching.

6. Transition to establishing common knowledge about the Holocaust. Tell the students you will be giving them 4 key pieces of information to make sure everyone is on the same page.

- (1) **Transition to slide 3.** In 1933, the Nazi Party took control of the country of Germany. Germany is a country in Europe, connected to Poland to the right, and Netherlands, Belgium, France to the left. The Nazi Party is nickname for the National Socialist Workers' Party, a political party that developed after World War I (1914-1918).

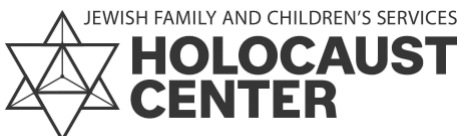
Transition to slide 4. A man named Adolf Hitler became the leader of this party in 1921 and was named chancellor or prime minister of Germany in 1933. He is the man on the left. The man on the right is the president of the nation, a man named Paul von Hidenburg. What is important to note is that even though Germany was democratic at the time and conducted elections, just like we do in the United States, Hitler was not elected by the German people. Roughly only 33% of the nation wanted him. He gained power because he was appointed.

Teaching Tip! If the students are unfamiliar with democratic processes, like elections, pause and discuss the presidential election process to provide links they can identify with.

- (2) Under Hitler, the Nazi Party changed, and in turn, Germany and those living in Germany were greatly affected. Hitler had no use for democracy, law, or human rights, and discriminated against many groups, especially Jews. This hatred against Jewish people is called antisemitism.

Transition to slide 5. Hitler and the Nazis discriminated against Jews through laws. Ask the students, *what do you see in the picture on the right?*

Teaching Tip! Not all students are comfortable sharing out in the whole class setting.



To differentiate instruction for all learners, provide time for students to think, pair-share, and then, share out into the whole class setting.

As students respond, highlight the Star of David sewn on the child's clothing. In addition to banning Jews from having jobs in government and removing all Jewish children from schools, the Nazis required all Jewish people to sew visual symbols like this one on their clothes. Ask the students, *why do you think the Nazis might have required this?*

As the students respond, highlight the fact that visual symbols of identification made it easier to discriminate against them.

The Star of David has a deep-rooted cultural significance for Jewish people. Scholars are unclear on the particular origination of pentagonal and hexagonal imagery; there are many theories, including that the Star of David evolved from the Seal of Solomon (five-pointed star) used in the ancient world as a talisman or originated from the Shield of David or *Magen David* in Hebrew, but it was not until the 17th and 18th century that the symbol began appearing as part of Judaism on ornaments and in synagogues. The symbol drastically grew in frequency by the 19th century when the Star of David became a religious symbol widely recognized by the religion. At the time, European Jews became more integrated into Christian communities and needed a symbol of Judaism to place on houses of worship the same ways the cross is used in churches. Eventually, the symbolism of the Star of David spread and became synonymous with Judaism. It is that very fact that the Nazis used the symbol: to intentionally dehumanize the Jewish peoples (Cantz, 2014; Lewis, 2016).

- (3) **Transition to slide 6.** Eventually those laws of discrimination turned into violence, and the Nazis decided to kill as many Jews as possible, taking the lives of 6 million Jewish men, women, and children.

- (4) This state-sponsored mass killing became known as the Holocaust.

7. **Transition to slide 7.** The magnitude or size of the Holocaust is hard to imagine. Prior to the start of World War II, there were approximately 9.5 million Jews living in Europe, including nearly 1.6 million Jewish children. Ask the students to dive deeper into the maps: *Looking at the map on the left, what do you see? Which countries had the largest and the least number of Jews? How did you determine this? Looking at the map on the right, what do you see?*

As the students respond, highlight the fact that the Greater Bay Area - all the counties listed on the map - has approximately 7 million people in it. The Holocaust took the lives of almost same amount of people.

8. **Transition to slide 8.** Many Jews tried to escape Germany and some non-Jewish people helped Jews hide or escape. Ask the students, *What are adjectives we can use to describe both groups: Jews who escaped and non-Jews who helped?*

As students share out, make sure to highlight words, like hero, upstander, resister, brave,

9. **Transition to slide 9.** Of those who hid or escaped, not all families could stay together. Many Jewish parents sent their children into hiding with non-Jewish families. The picture on the right shows this. Goldine, the little girl on the right, was hidden by the Jansen family in Belgium, a country to the left of Germany in Europe. Goldine was hidden in the open. Hiding could be physical hiding or hiding in the open. Ask the students, *What is the difference between hiding physically and in the open?*

As students respond, make links to the commonly known game of hide-and-go-seek for physical hiding and playing pretend for hiding in the open.

Teaching Tip! Need a larger extension project? Have the students look into Anne Frank and her experiences physically hiding throughout the Holocaust. Her diary has many versions specific for young readers. See the supplementary resources for additional ideas for extension work.

10. **Transition to slide 10.** Regardless of the way they were hidden, all Hidden Children experienced similar challenges. *Have the students read Ed. L's quote on the slide (and below):*

I was lucky. I survived it without any physical scars but I am scarred nevertheless. You see I was robbed: The [Nazis] robbed me of my youth, they robbed me of having parents, and they robbed me of having friends.. (Ed L.)

Ask the students, *What do you think he means by "robbed"? What kind of scars might Ed be talking about?*

As students share out, highlight concepts and themes like identity and childhood. For example, worried of being found out, Ed and other Hidden Children had to hide parts of their identity and culture. They could not celebrate or observe their faith, had to take on a new name and (often) language, were not with their parents or siblings, and feared being found out all the time.

11. **Transition to slide 11.** Tell the students they will be exploring two case studies of Hidden Children hidden in the open. Divide the class into two sections. Pass out the [Case Studies](#). Please note, half of the class should receive the first photo while the second half should receive the second photo. Then, go through the directions on the slides and below:

- (1) Investigate your assigned photo. What do you see?
- (2) Analyze what you see based on what you see in the photo and now know about the Holocaust and Hidden Children. What experience(s) did this child likely have? How might their identity be affected by this?
- (3) Note your curiosities. What questions remain for you?

Teaching Tip! Need more scaffolding? Do the first case study together, and then, transition to student investigation with the second case study.

12. Bring the class back together and have the students share what they saw and learned about the photos based on their investigations and analyses. If time permits, move into a discussion about the questions that remain.
13. Lastly, revisit the [KWL Chart](#) from the start of class, and have the students respond to the last question: *What did you learn about the Holocaust and Hidden Children?*
14. End class with a share out, creating a summary of knowledge while emphasizing the importance of upstanders in the role of Hidden Children.

Next Steps? History comes alive through primary sources. To learn about bringing a Holocaust survivor to your classroom through our Speaker's Bureau Program, contact the JFCS Holocaust Center (holocaustcenter@jfcs.org).

Supplementary Resources

- To engage your students deeper on the Holocaust either before or after this lesson, Loic Dauvillier's graphic novel, *Hidden: A Child's Story of the Holocaust* is a beautiful story told through the eyes of a child. The book investigates the persecution of the Nazis while balancing themes of bravery of resistance in age appropriate ways for a 3-5th grade reading level.
- [Here](#) is a comprehensive list of additional age-appropriate resources compiled by the JFCS Holocaust Center.

Glossary

Antisemitism: Beginning in ancient times and continuing to the present day, this is the name for the hatred or prejudice against Jewish people as a group for being Jewish.

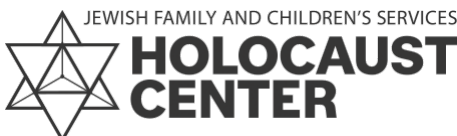
Hidden Children: Jewish children who were hidden during the Holocaust in an attempt to save them from the Nazis.

Jew: A person who is a descendant of ancient Hebrews or someone whose religion is Judaism.

Nazi: A member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party that controlled Germany from 1933-1945.

Nazi Party: A nickname for the National Socialist Workers' Party, a political party that developed after World War I (1914-1918). Adolf Hitler became the leader of this party in 1921 and was named chancellor of Germany in 1933. Under Hitler, the party had no use for democracy, law, or human rights, and discriminated against many groups, especially Jews.

Physical hiding: Hiding by concealing one's existence from the outside world (e.g. in a cupboard, basement, attic, etc.)



Upstander: Someone who sees something wrong, and takes action to make it right; someone who stands up for what they believe is right.

References

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- Lewis, D. (2016, July 6). How did the six-pointed star become associated with Judaism? *Smithsonian*. Retrieved from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/how-did-the-six-pointed-star-become-associated-with-judaism-180959693/>

Credits/Copyrights

A Jewish Boy wearing the compulsory Star of David.. Prague, Czechoslovakia, between September 1941 and December 1944. Courtesy of US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Copyright of Czechoslovak News Agency.

A Jewish girl from Krakow, living on the Aryan side in Warsaw, dressed in white, ready for her Confirmation. Courtesy of Tauber Holocaust Library and Archives at JFCS Holocaust Center.

Goldine Erenfeld Teicher was hidden by the Jansen family in Belgium. Courtesy of Tauber Holocaust Library and Archives at JFCS Holocaust Center.

Jewish girl, hiding in the Netherlands, holds sign "Forbidden to Jews." Courtesy of Tauber Holocaust Library and Archives at JFCS Holocaust Center.

Jewish Population of Europe in 1933: Population Data by Country. Copyright of US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

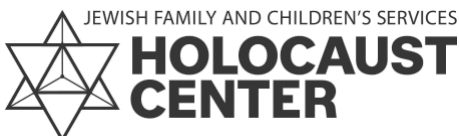
Map Highlighting Germany, 2022. Copyright of WorldAtlas.com.

Recently appointed as German chancellor, Adolf Hitler greets President Paul von Hindenburg in Potsdam, Germany, on March 21, 1933. Courtesy of B. I. Sanders. Copyright of US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Resources available at the Tauber Holocaust Library

*** Marks items that are part of the Teacher Resource Center and may be checked out by local students and educators.*

(1990). *We Were Children Just Like You*. Center for Holocaust Studies, Documentation and Research.



Bay Area Hidden Children (2001). *Our Stories: As Told During the Meetings Between Our Founding and Our Tenth Anniversary*. Bay Area Hidden Children.

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