

Lives Lost, Lives Found:
Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1945

Note to Teachers:

This outreach kit is intended to bring a piece of the museum into your classroom. A unique aspect of the museum experience is its ability to convey history through the objects and documents in its collection. Students have the opportunity to become engaged in the stories behind the objects, as well as the period in history from which they came. In this kit, you will find reproductions of photographs and documents from an exhibit at the Jewish Museum of Maryland. By examining these materials, students will learn how to interpret primary source materials. They will think about the practice of collecting and enrich their understanding of local Jewish history, as they learn about how the Holocaust reverberated in Maryland.

The kit has several main objectives:

- To provide teachers with resource material on the topic of Holocaust history.
- To illuminate an often neglected story of the Holocaust by focusing on the experiences of those who left Germany in the 1930s and established new lives in Baltimore.
- To enrich student study of immigration history by examining how the German Jewish refugees represented a new wave of Jewish immigration in Baltimore.
- To encourage students to think about the universal conditions of refugees by making connections between US immigration policies in the 1930s and current events.
- To teach students how to interpret primary source materials

The kit is organized into different sections. The three lesson plans enclosed detail suggested activities for engaging students in hands-on learning. They are supplemented with ample background information including a timeline, glossary, and teacher resource sheets examining worldwide reaction to Jewish refugees. Photographic and document reproductions are used in conjunction with the lesson plans. Student resource sheets are also provided to assist with lesson plan facilitation. In addition, an exhibition catalog and a related article have also been included and provide additional background material.

We hope that you will find this kit engaging and enjoyable. The education staff welcomes your comments and evaluation of this kit. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or suggestions.

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***Lives Lost, Lives Found:
Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1945***

Introduction:

Between 1933 and 1945, approximately 3,000 Jews fled Nazi persecution in Germany and found safe haven in Baltimore. The materials in this resource kit are based on *Lives Lost, Lives Found: Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1945*, an original exhibition developed by the Jewish Museum of Maryland that explored the experiences of these refugees and their struggle to leave Germany and the challenges they faced as newcomers in America. The exhibit also examined the individuals who assisted their flight and the challenges they faced as newcomers in America.

Objectives:

- To enrich students' understanding of how the Holocaust reverberated locally by focusing on the experiences of German Jewish refugees who settled in Baltimore
- To encourage students to reflect on the motivations of a select group of Americans who fought strict US immigration laws in order to assist the refugees in their escape from Germany
- To explore the third wave of Jewish immigration to Baltimore (following the German Jewish settlers in the early to mid 1800s and the Eastern European migration of the 1880s-1920s) and to examine the impact of this group on the local Jewish community
- To teach students about the importance of oral history as a tool for historical research
- To highlight the experiences of refugee children as a means of encouraging students to imagine what it would be like to live in similar circumstances
- To encourage students to make connections between the experiences of the Jewish refugees in the 1930s and the contemporary plight of refugees

Grade Level: These materials have been developed for students in grades 9-12.

Background Information:

Before Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the 525,000 Jews living in Germany had largely integrated into their nation's social, cultural, and political life and felt secure in their assimilation into German society. This all changed when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party assumed power amidst a period of great economic and political turmoil. The Nazi Party blamed Germany's problems on the Jews and immediately launched a campaign to rid Germany of the "Jewish problem."

Many German Jews did not initially recognize the extent of the Nazi threat. However, as life became more and more difficult for them and as the government passed a series of laws restricting their rights, many began to explore their options for leaving Germany. It was not, however, until Kristallnacht on November 9-10, 1938, when the Nazis instigated physical attacks on Jews, vandalizing their businesses, and burning and destroying synagogues, that a turning point was reached, and many more Jews recognized the seriousness of their situation.

Finding the means to leave Germany and immigrating to another country presented many challenges. The German government made it difficult for Jews to leave by forbidding them to take currency out of the country. Even more problematic was finding

a country willing to accept Jewish refugees. In the 1920s the United States had implemented restrictive quotas that limited the number of immigrants. Applicants for US visas had to undergo a rigorous screening process. In order to prove that they would not become dependent on public welfare, the refugees also had to find American sponsors willing to sign affidavits guaranteeing their support. Once the refugees met all of these criteria, they still had to wait, often for long periods, for their visas to arrive.

Once their visas were finally issued, many refugees set sail for America. Between 1933 and 1939 approximately 74,000 Jews from Germany and other countries under Nazi occupation immigrated to the US. Three thousand refugees were re-settled in Baltimore. Baltimore was seen as a desirable place because it was a mid-sized city that offered job opportunities, affordable housing, and a strong Jewish community. In the late 1930s, Baltimore's Jewish community numbered around 73,000. Individuals and communal organizations mobilized to help the German Jewish refugees escape Europe and adjust to their new lives. They did so by signing affidavits for refugees, working to change restrictive American immigration policies, taking in foster children, and helping refugees find housing and employment.

Once they settled into their new American lives, the refugees faced many additional challenges. Jobs were scarce, and most newcomers lacked the language skills needed to obtain the same professional status that they had held in Germany. Men who in Germany had worked near the top of the professional ladder were forced to accept menial jobs, as store clerks, dishwashers, and door-to-door salesmen. In addition, they were not usually able to resume the lifestyles that they had left behind in Germany as they could only afford modest apartments. For the women, they, too, had difficulty adjusting to their new lives. Whereas in Germany, many were middle class housewives, because of the new economic position that they faced in the US, many refugee women worked as domestic workers, as factory workers, and seamstresses, and were often forced to take in boarders to help pay the rent.

Adapting to life in America was easier for children than for their parents, although they, too, faced challenges. Many were demoted by several grades because of their inability to speak English. Yet, like immigrant children in other generations, they learned the language quickly which aided their assimilation into American society. School aided their socialization and ability to Americanize. Forty children arrived in Baltimore without their parents, as sponsors of the Baltimore branch of the German Jewish Children's Aid, Inc. While some children were eventually reunited with their parents, others never saw their families again.

Often, the newly arrived refugees sought familiar faces by socializing with other German refugees. Most congregated in the same neighborhoods – upper Eutaw Place, Forest Park, or upper Park Heights Avenue. They formed social clubs that organized outings, speakers, and sporting events. To help members of the community who were in need, they also organized a self-help organization, the *Chevra Ahavas Chesed* (Society of Loving Mercy).

When the US entered World War II, the refugees found themselves in a strange situation: the US government branded them “enemy aliens” despite their status as refugees from Germany. However, many young refugees saw the war as an opportunity to prove themselves to their new homeland. The armed forces, eagerly seeking new recruits, were able to expedite the naturalization process for these refugees, and they

quickly became American citizens. For those who enlisted, the war provided an opportunity to return to their country of birth as victors.

Lesson Plan #1: Photograph Exploration

Overview:

In this lesson, students will examine reproductions of photographs that were on display in the Museum's exhibit as they learn about the experiences of German Jewish refugees to Baltimore.

Materials:

- Reproduced photographs and posters (you may make additional copies of the photographs if needed for classroom use only)
- Student Resource Sheets #1 A-I (note that each Resource Sheet corresponds to a specific photograph)
- Teacher Resource Sheets #1, 2, 3 (Timeline of Events, Worldwide Reaction to Jewish Refugees, Glossary)
- Teacher Resource Sheet #4 (Photograph Answer Key)

Review with students the background information included above. If you have not covered Holocaust history extensively with your class, Teacher Resource Sheets #1, 2, and 3 will provide you with additional information to share with your students.

Divide students into groups of 4-5 children per group. Hand each group one of the photograph reproductions along with the Student Resource Sheet that corresponds to the photo that they have been given. Explain that the photographs that they are examining have been reproduced from photographs that were on display in an exhibition. Give students 15-minutes to look over the photograph that they have been given and ask them, as a group, to answer the questions on the Student Resource Sheet. Once each group has finished answering the questions, give each the opportunity to share its photograph with the class and to discuss how they answered their assigned questions. Please note that many of the questions ask for students to use critical thinking skills to make an educated guess based on what they observe. There is no one correct answer to each question.

As a culminating group activity, ask the class to create a photography exhibit by arranging the photographs into one of five sections. The five sections are: *Lives in Fullness* (what life was like for Jews prior to 1933); *The Nazi Onslaught* (the rise of the Nazi Party and the repercussions on the German Jewish community); *Journey to America*; *Life in America*; and *World War II*. Please note that a brief description of each photograph, along with answers as to their corresponding exhibition section, can be found on Teacher Resource Sheet #4. Enlarged posters of each image have also been included with this lesson, and are available for student use.

Lesson Plan #2: Creative Writing Exercise

Overview:

The importance of oral history as a research tool is explored in this lesson. Students discuss how interviews with Holocaust survivors have added to our knowledge of this time, and they will review samples of quotes from refugees who were interviewed in conjunction with the exhibition. In the final activity, students participate in a creative writing exercise.

Materials:

- Student Resource Sheet #2 (Oral History Quotes)
- Student Resource Sheet #3 (Story Beginnings)

To begin this lesson, discuss with your students the importance of oral history as a tool for historical research. In the past ten years, there has been a major effort by many organizations to collect, preserve, and share the stories of Holocaust survivors. Ask students to think about why there has been such a large effort. What is the purpose of preserving these oral histories? To whom should they be made available? How does having oral histories from Holocaust survivors increase our understanding of this historical event?

To create the Lives Lost exhibit, the Museum interviewed dozens of people who shared their memories of how their lives were affected by the Nazi rise to power and how their family became refugees in Baltimore. Distribute copies of Student Resource Sheet #2 with oral history quotes from the exhibit. Have students read some of the quotes out loud. Discuss how different our knowledge about the Holocaust and its local impact would be if we were not able to talk with people whose lives were personally affected.

Students will now have the chance to write their own stories based on what they have discussed in the previous lesson plan. Explain that for the purpose of this exercise, they should imagine that they have recently left Germany as a Jewish refugee and traveled to Baltimore. Distribute Student Resource Sheet #3. Students can use one of the three ideas on this sheet as a way of starting their stories. Encourage students to think about some of the personal stories they learned about in the photo exploration lesson plan. They can also refer to the oral history quotes for inspiration. Once students are done this exercise, have them share their writings with the class.

Lesson Plan #3: Refugees Past and Present

Overview:

In this lesson, students will learn about US immigration policies and the bureaucratic hurdles that Jewish refugees faced while attempting to leave Germany. They will examine reproductions of the various documents that refugees needed to acquire in advance of departure. Finally, they will research current US immigration laws and debate the process refugees from all over the world must undergo in order to become American citizens.

Materials:

- (2) Passports – Betty Sara Straus / Werner Marx
- Affidavit – from Henry S. Miller on behalf of Max Meier

- Teacher Resource Sheet #5 – Immigration Laws and Policies: Internet Resources

Background Information:

US immigration laws are complex and constantly changing. Whereas the US welcomed immigrants from many countries throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, its open door policy ended in 1924, when strict immigration quotas were established. In the 1930s, German Jewish refugees were subject to these quotas that set limits on the numbers of immigrants per country permitted to enter the US each year. The annual limit for immigrants from both Germany and Austria at this time was 27,370. There were no accommodations for individuals who were fleeing life threatening circumstances, and Jews fleeing Nazi rule had to undergo the same application process as all other potential immigrants. Upon completion of their visa applications and submission of all the necessary paperwork, applicants still endured waits of up to a year for their travel permits. Tragically, for many Jews, once their visas arrived, it was too late, and they were trapped in Germany.

Although the materials in this guide focus on the experiences of Jewish refugees, Jews are not the only people who have suffered dislocation. Many situations – including war, famine, and religious and political persecution – force people to leave their homelands and become refugees. Between 1990 and 2000, approximately 19,000 refugees fled their native countries and settled in Maryland.* The refugee population has changed in recent years to reflect the various countries that have been ravaged by war, famine, and political instability. In the early 1990s, the majority of refugees in Maryland came from the former Soviet republics and Vietnam. By the mid to late 1990s, more and more refugees began arriving from countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the Balkans, including Liberia, Somalia, Cameroon, and Bosnia Herzegovina. To assist refugees in their adjustment to life in Maryland, organizations such as the Maryland Office for New Americans provide services such as language classes, citizenship preparation courses, and job and housing assistance.

[* for more information and statistics about Maryland’s refugee population, refer to the Maryland Office for New Americans website – www.dhr.state.md.us/mona]

Document Exploration:

Students will now examine reproductions of authentic immigration documents that refugees brought with them from Germany to the US. Use the following discussion questions as a guide.

- Passport belonging to Betty Sara Straus
 - 1) What language is on the passport? (German)
 - 2) Are there any distinguishing marks on this passport that tell when it was issued? (Two marks indicate that the passport was issued under the Nazi regime - the red ‘J’ identifies Betty as Jewish; the swastika stamp)
 - 3) There is another distinguishing feature that students might not notice. In 1938, the Nazis decreed that all Jewish women had to adopt ‘Sara’ as a middle name as another way of separating Jews and identifying them. Men had to adopt the name ‘Israel’.
 - 4) How does this passport look similar to or different from others that they have seen?

5) What is the importance of a passport? For what reasons is it necessary to have one?

- Passport belonging to Werner Marx

1) What personal information can you learn about Werner Marx from his passport? (See what information students can decipher before providing a translation)

“Beruf” – “profession”

“Geburtsort” – “birthplace”

“Geburtstag” – “birthday”

“Gestalt” – “size”

“Gesicht” – “face”

“Farbe der Augen” – “eye color”

“Farbe des Haares” – “hair color”

- Affidavit from Henry S. Miller on behalf of Max Meier

As part of their visa application, refugees had to include a signed affidavit of support by an American citizen. The individual who signed the affidavit swore that he would assume full responsibility for the immigrant so that the US would not find itself providing welfare for jobless newcomers. While many Jewish refugees had relatives in the US who willingly signed affidavits on their behalf, others sent letters to strangers in the hope that someone would take pity on their plight and provide a signed affidavit.

- 1) What information can you learn about Henry S. Miller from this affidavit?
- 2) What information can you learn about Max Meier?
- 3) Why do you think that the US required signed affidavits as a part of the visa process?
- 4) How might this part of the process impeded refugees from receiving their visas?
- 5) Why do you think so many people signed affidavits for people they did not know?

Classroom Debate:

For this part of the lesson, students will conduct a research project investigating current US immigration laws. Students should use all available library and internet sources (a list of recommended websites is included on Teacher Resource Sheet #5) to learn about the process of applying to become a refugee to the US. In addition to researching laws and policies, they should search for news articles relating to current world events that have resulted in people being forced from their homes. As they are doing their research, they should keep a list of arguments in favor of and against strict immigration laws.

Once students have gathered the data, they will then have the opportunity to debate what they have uncovered. Divide the class into three groups and assign one group the task of arguing in favor of tougher immigration laws. The second group will argue in favor of easing restrictions. The third group will present a case that current laws are adequate as they are and do not need to be strengthened or weakened.

Here are some issues students should consider:

- Should there be strict tests to determine who is a legitimate refugee? If so, what should the qualifications be?

- Has the situation changed in the past three years with concerns about the connections between immigrants and terrorism? How have new fears impacted laws?
- Once someone is admitted to the US, should he or she be able to bring all family members?
- Does the US have a moral obligation to provide assistance to refugees?
- Once someone has received permission to enter the US as a refugee, what is the process to become a naturalized citizen? Is this sufficient or should there be more or fewer tests?

LESSON PLAN I

Teacher Resource #1

**Timeline of Events in Nazi Germany and Occupied Europe
1933-1945**

January 30, 1933	Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.
April 1933	The first in a series of laws barring Jews from practicing certain professions (i.e. medicine, law, accounting, teaching); quotas are placed on the number of Jewish students allowed in schools and universities.
May 10, 1933	Joseph Goebbels, Germany's Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, arranges a public book burning of books deemed "Un-German." Thousands of works by Jewish authors are destroyed.
September 1935	Nuremberg Laws strip Jews of their German citizenship, prevent them from marrying non-Jews, and deny them voting rights.
October 1936	Jewish children are barred from public parks, swimming pools, playgrounds, and school clubs.
Fall 1937	Nazis begin to takeover Jewish owned businesses, a process called "Aryanization."
March 1938	German troops enter Austria and declare a union of the two nations (Anschluss). Antisemitic decrees are extended to Austria.
August 1938	Jewish men are ordered to add "Israel," and Jewish women "Sara," to their names.
September 1938	Jews are banned from public movies, concerts, and cultural events; Germany annexes a portion of Czechoslovakia known as the Sudetenland.
October 1938	Jews are forced to carry new passports that are prominently stamped with the letter "J."
November 9-10, 1938	Nazi-sponsored night of riots, known as Kristallnacht, aimed at terrorizing Jews. 91 Jews are killed, many more injured, 191 synagogues are destroyed, and 7,500 businesses are looted.
November 1938	Jewish children are banned from public schools.
January 1939	Jews are required to carry cards identifying them as Jews.
February 1939	Jews are ordered to hand over their gold and silver.
September 1, 1939	Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.

April - May 1940	Germany invades Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg
September 1940	Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite (Axis) Pact
October 1940	The Warsaw Ghetto is established
December 1941	Japanese attack Pearl Harbor and the US enters the War
1942	Five death camps are established in Poland including Auschwitz-Birkenau (the largest), Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, and Majdanek
April-May 1943	The Warsaw Ghetto uprising lasts 27 days before being suppressed by the Nazis
June 1944	D-day – Allies land in Normandy marking the beginning of the liberation of France
July 1944	Soviet troops liberate the first concentration camp in Majdanek
January 1945	Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz
April 1945	Soviet troops reach Berlin; Hitler commits suicide
May 1945	Germany surrenders to Allied forces
October 1945	Nuremberg Trials begin in Germany

Worldwide Reaction to Jewish Refugees

Jews attempting to leave Germany and other countries under German occupation faced the challenge of finding countries willing to accept them.

- In July 1938, a conference was convened in Evian, France to discuss the issue of Jewish refugees. Of the 32 countries that sent delegates to the conference (including the United States, France, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia), only the Dominican Republic agreed to accept additional refugees.

The following is a summary of the immigration policies of several countries:

- Mexico: introduced severe immigration restrictions in 1937
- Peru, Columbia, Venezuela, and India were among the countries that were mostly closed to refugees
- South Africa: allowed unrestricted immigration from 1933-1935, but from 1936-1945 few refugees were accepted
- Britain: accepted 10,000 unaccompanied Jewish children on an emergency basis as a part of the Kindertransport program; allowed approximately 60,000 refugees to settle in Palestine, but after 1939, refused to allow additional settlement there
- Shanghai, China: accepted 25,000 refugees – more than those taken in by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India combined

The United States:

- Only 27,000 immigrants from Germany and Austria were allowed per year. This quota was not even filled during most of the era because of additional governmental red tape. In 1939, 309,000 German, Austrian, and Czech Jews applied for admission to the US.
- Congress rejected Bill to open Alaska to Jewish refugees (1940)
- Government tightened the quota system and rejected a proposal to admit 20,000 German Jewish children above the quota limits (1941)
- State Department rejected a Swedish proposal for the joint rescue of 20,000 Jewish children from Germany (1943)

Unsuccessful attempts at escape:

- In 1939, *The St. Louis*, a ship filled with 900 German Jewish refugees, was refused permission to dock in Chile, Cuba, Columbia, and the United States. The ship eventually returned to Europe, and many of its occupants perished in Nazi death camps.
- *The Struma*, a ship with 770 Jewish refugees, traveled to Palestine in 1942. The British refused the ship permission to land there, and it was forced back to Bulgaria. The ship sank in the Bosphorus, and all but one passenger was killed.

Glossary

Affidavit – Sworn statement. In order to immigrate to the United States, refugees needed to find individuals willing to sponsor them through signed official declarations of support.

Allies – Twenty-six nations, led by Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union, that joined together in war against Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Antisemitism – Prejudice directed against Jews.

Aryan – A term used by the Nazis to describe a superior race of individuals with “pure” German blood.

Auschwitz-Birkenau – The largest death camp (located near Cracow, Poland) built by the Nazis in 1940 to imprison and murder Jews and other prisoners. More than a million people were killed there. At least 90% of the victims were Jewish.

Concentration Camp – Facility where people are confined because of their religion, ethnicity, or political views. Most Nazi concentration camps served as centers for forced labor and mass murder and were constructed to hold Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, prisoners of war, and political opponents.

Death Camp – Concentration camps where people were murdered en masse in gas chambers.

Deportation – The process of expelling an individual or group from a country or region. The Nazis deported Jews and other minority groups to ghettos, concentration camps, labor camps, and death camps.

Final Solution – Nazi code for the mass murder of all of Europe’s Jews. Refers to “the final solution to the Jewish question in Europe.”

Fuhrer – German word for “leader.”

Genocide – Deliberate, systematic destruction of a racial, religious, ethnic, or political group.

Ghetto – Designated section within a city where groups of people are forced to live. The Nazis established the Warsaw Ghetto in Poland where Jews were deported before being sent to concentration camps. Conditions in the Ghetto were miserable, as residents were crowded into small quarters, food was scarce, and access to and from the Ghetto was restricted.

Holocaust – Term referring to the government-sanctioned persecution and mass murder of Jews and other targeted groups by the Nazis beginning in 1933 and lasting through 1945.

Juden – German word for “Jews.”

Kristallnacht – “Night of the Broken Glass” that took place on November 9-10, 1938 throughout Germany. The Nazis incited mobs of Germans to attack Jews, to loot Jewish-owned businesses and to destroy synagogues.

Nazi – Short for National Socialist German Workers Party, a German political party formed in 1919, that advocated a right-wing, nationalist, and antisemitic agenda. Under its leader, Adolf Hitler, this party ruled Germany from 1933 – 1945.

Nuremberg Laws - A series of laws passed by the Nazi government, beginning in 1935, that severely restricted the rights of Jews. Among other things, these laws prohibited Jews from marrying non-Jews, prevented Jews from practicing certain professions, and forced Jews to wear badges identifying themselves as Jews. These laws were extended to other countries in Europe that were conquered by the German army.

Nuremberg Trials – From October 1945 to October 1946, the International Military Tribunal held trials in Germany for twenty-two leading German officials accused of war crimes. Twelve Nazi officers were sentenced to death; three to life imprisonment; and four were given prison terms.

Occupation – Control of a country taken over by a foreign military power.

Refugee – Person seeking to emigrate from his/her native country due to racial, political, religious, or ethnic persecution.

Visa – Travel permit.

Yellow Star – The Nazis forced Jews in Germany and other European countries that they occupied to wear an armband or patch on their clothing to identify them and distinguish them from non-Jews. The star refers to the Star of David, a six-pointed star, that is a symbol of Judaism.

Teacher Resource Sheet #4

Photograph Answer Key

- Photograph #1 (L2002.103.1152)– The Weil Family (Hilda and Theo with children Erna, Lisa, and Toni), of Freiberg, Germany, on vacation in Hoenthal, Germany, in front of a waterfall, 1925 (courtesy of Julius Mandel and Brenda Weil Mandel) [Lives in Fullness]
For more detailed information about the Weil Family, refer to the article “Dispossession and Adaptation: The Weil Sisters Rebuild Their Family In America”

Prior to the Nazi rise to power, the Weil family was very well assimilated into a high strata of German society. Theo Weil fought in the German Army during WW I, and he was proud of his war record. Because of all these factors, the family was initially hesitant to leave Germany when the Nazis rose to power. Finally, after much pleading on the part of the daughters with their parents, the family applied for a visa to leave for the US. However, Theo was among the Jewish men arrested in the wake of *Kristallnacht*. It was then up to Hilda and her three daughters to arrange for their father’s release from prison and to sell the family business, raising the funds needed to assist with their escape from Germany. While awaiting their visas, the three sisters moved to England where they worked menial jobs. In 1940, their visas arrived, and Erna, Lisa, and Toni immigrated to Baltimore without their parents. Upon their arrival, they worked strenuously to arrange their parents’ passage. The enterprising sisters eventually found jobs and worked to save enough money to pay for their parents’ tickets to Baltimore, as well as to purchase a house for the family. Hilda and Theo finally arrived in Baltimore in April 1941.

- Photograph #2 – Jews are forced to scrub the street in Vienna while a crowd watches, March or April 1938 (Dokumentationsarchiv des Oesterreichischen Widerstandes, courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum) [The Nazi Onslaught]

Germany annexed Austria in March 1938, in what became known as the *Anschluss* or union of the two countries. Immediately following the *Anschluss*, antisemitic decrees were extended to Austrian Jews. Whereas German Jews had several years to adjust to Nazi rule and the increasingly restrictive regulations barring them from participating in public life, for Austrian Jews, their situation deteriorated practically overnight. This photograph documents an example of the abuses to which they were subjected.

- Photograph #3 – Baden-Baden Synagogue the morning after Kristallnacht, November 1938, (Stadtmuseum Baden-Baden, courtesy of the USHMM Photo Archives) [The Nazi Onslaught]

Kristallnacht (the Night of the Broken Glass), which took place throughout Germany on November 8-9, 1938, marked the turning point for many German Jews who were initially hesitant to leave Germany because they felt that the situation was temporary. During the Nazi-sponsored pogroms, mobs attacked Jewish homes and businesses and set synagogues on fire. In the wake of the

attacks, Jewish men were rounded up, arrested, and sent to prisons and concentration camps. For those Jews who had not left, *Kristallnacht* served as the impetus for finding safe haven in any country that would accept them.

- Photograph #4 (L2003.63.3) - Relatives saying goodbye to members of the Cohen Family as they depart by ship from Holland, July 1939 (courtesy of Rudolph Cohen) [Journey to America]

The Cohen Family – William (father), Gertrude (stepmother), and brothers Victor, Henry, Rudolph, and Walter – was so desperate to leave Germany that William bribed the Panamanian consul in Hamburg for an agricultural visa that enabled them to immigrate in Panama. Victor and Henry even attended agricultural school to help persuade the Panamanian government to accept their visa request. Although they knew that life would be difficult for them in this rural poverty-stricken country, it was still preferable to staying in Germany. The family stayed in Panama for a year before they received visas to settle in the US.

The two people in the middle of the photograph, saying goodbye to the family, are David and Bertha Mansfeld. The Mansfelds were unable to find passage out of Germany, and they perished in the Holocaust. Everyone who got out of Germany left family members and friends behind, making their journey bittersweet.

- Photograph #5 – Hamburg-Amerika Line Ship SS Hansa (George Wittenstein, courtesy of USHMM) [Journey to America]
This is a photograph of a ship that brought refugees to America from Hamburg, Germany. Once all the proper paperwork had been completed and all the bureaucratic hurdles overcome, Jews could purchase tickets on a ship, such as this one, taking them out of Germany. For some, the journey on the ship represented the first opportunity they had to feel free from Nazi oppression.
- Photograph #6 (L2003.89.5) – The Baneman Family on board the *Orinoco* en route to Cuba, 1939, (courtesy of Edith Baneman Goldschmitt), [Journey to America]

The Nazi government did not allow Jews to take currency out of Germany beyond 10 marks per person (the equivalent of approximately \$3). Refugees could, however, pay for ship tickets in German marks before they were confiscated. Therefore, some refugees decided to splurge on their accommodations. This photograph documents the Baneman family's decision to do just that. For some refugees, the journey represented a relief from the feeling of always being in imminent danger. Of course, for many, it was difficult to enjoy the journey knowing that so many other people were left behind. The Baneman family first journeyed to Cuba and eventually settled in Baltimore.

- Photograph #7 (L2003.75.14) – Herta Griffel and her foster family, 1942 (courtesy of Herta Griffel Baitch) [Life in America]

Herta Griffel was born in Vienna, Austria. When Germany annexed Austria in 1938, antisemitic decrees were extended there. Her father died in 1939. In

1940, Herta's mother sent her to live with a foster family in the US. She was seven years old when she left, and she remembers her mother telling her that she would have a new mother to take care of her. Herta left with a group of seven other children, sponsored by the German Jewish Children's Aid Society (a national organization that had a branch in Baltimore). Of these children, Herta was the only one who was sent to Baltimore. Initially, Herta lived with a temporary family, the Baers, a warm and loving family who treated her very well. Within six months of moving to America, Herta was able to read, write, and speak in English. After six months, Herta was taken from the Baers to live with another family. This was a very traumatic transition for Herta, as she felt so secure with the Baers. She went to live with the Friedlander family in Forest Park. Although the Friedlanders treated her well, Herta did not adapt as well to her new family; the mother, Mary, was chronically ill, and the daughter, Beverly, resented having a new sibling. She was never adopted by the family, and grew up not really knowing her position there. Herta initially stayed in touch with her mother, but eventually the letters stopped coming. Her mother perished in the Holocaust.

- Photograph #8 (JMM 2001.100.10) - The Tikvah Youth Group members, late 1940s (gift of Walter Straus) [Life in America]

Baltimore's German Jewish refugee established several social organizations to promote interaction among members of their community. The Tikvah Youth Group was an offshoot of the *Chevra Ahavas Chesed* (the Society of Loving Mercy) which was begun as a burial society but expanded to become a self-help organization run by refugees to assist other refugees. The Tikvah Youth Group targeted young adults aged 16-24. The members of this group organized activities, went on trips together, and threw parties. Even though life was easier for younger refugees than for their parents, in many cases, they still chose to socialize with others who had similar background and shared common experiences.

- Photograph #9 (L2003.64.4) – While he was stationed in Europe in 1945, Max Knisbacher visited relatives who had survived the Holocaust (courtesy of Jeffrey Knisbacher) [World War II]

Max Knisbacher, who had settled in the US in 1938, was drafted into the US Army in 1944. He became a naturalized citizen just before he was drafted. He is pictured with his half-sister, Esther Knisbacher, and his niece, Giselle Strassberg, in Paris. Giselle was the daughter of Max's sister, Mali, who perished in Auschwitz. For refugees who enlisted in the armed services, World War II presented the opportunity to return as victors to Europe, and in some cases, they were able to reunite with long lost family members and friends.

History Kit – List of Photos

- #1) L2002.103.112 – courtesy of Julius Mandel and Brenda Weil Mandel
(The Weil Family on Vacation)
- #2) Dokumentationsarchiv des Oesterreichischen Widerstandes – courtesy of the
USHMM Photo Archives
(Jews Are Forced to Scrub the Street)
- #3) Stadtmuseum Baden-Baden, courtesy of the USHMM Photo Archives
(Baden-Baden Synagogue the morning after Kristallnacht, November 1938.)
- #4) L2003.63.3 – courtesy of Rudolph Cohen
(Relatives Say Goodbye to the Cohen Family)
- #5) George J. Wittenstein, courtesy of USHMM.
(Hamburg-Amerika Line ship SS Hansa)
- #6) L2003.89.5, courtesy of Edith Baneman Goldschmitt.
(The Baneman family onboard the Orinoco en route to Cuba, 1939)
- #7) L2003.75.14 – courtesy of Herta Griffel Baitch
(Friedlander Family with Herta Griffel)
- #8) JMM 2001.100.10 – gift of Walter Straus
(The Tikvah Youth Group)
- #9) L2003.64.4 – courtesy of Jeffrey Knisbacher
(Max Knisbacher Visiting Relatives)

Student Resource Sheet #1A

Photo #1

Subject of Photograph:

- 1) What is this photograph documenting?

- 2) Where do you think that the photograph was taken?

- 3) When was it taken?

- 4) What can you tell about the people in the photograph based on the way that they are dressed?

- 5) What are the ages of the people in the photo?

- 6) What can you tell about them based on their facial expressions?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1B

Photo #2

Subject of Photograph:

- 1) What is this photograph documenting?

- 2) Where do you think the photograph was taken?

- 3) When was it taken?

- 4) Who are the people in the front who are on their knees? How are they dressed?

- 5) Who are the people standing directly behind them? How are they dressed?

- 6) Who are the people standing in the background? How are they dressed?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1C

Photo #3

Subject of the Photograph:

1. What do you see in this photograph? What is the focus of the photo?
2. Describe the building in the photograph. Is there anything that tells you what kind of building it is? Have you ever seen a building like this one before? If so, where?
3. Why do you think the building is on fire?
4. When do you think this photograph was taken?

Photograph Setting:

5. Where do you think this building was located? Is there anything in the photograph that tells you?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1D

Photo #4

Subject of the Photograph:

- 1) What is this photograph documenting?

- 2) Where do you think the photograph was taken?

- 3) When was it taken?

- 4) Who are the people in the photograph? What can you tell about them based on how they are dressed?

- 5) What do you think that the people on the left side of the photo are looking at?

- 6) What can you tell about the people on the left side of the photo based on their expressions?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1E

Photo #5

Photograph subject:

- 1) What do you see in this photograph? What is the focus of the photo?

- 2) Are there any people in the photograph? How many? Who do you think they are? Can you tell anything about them?

- 3) What kind of ship are you looking at? What is the name of the shipping company? Where do you think the ship is traveling to? Who is traveling on it? What is in the cargo nets that are being raised into the ship?

- 4) When do you think the photograph was taken?

Photograph Setting:

- 5) Where do you think the photograph was taken? Describe as many details as you can that will help you identify the photo's setting

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1F

Photo #6

Photograph Subject:

- 1) What do you see in this photograph? How many people are there? Who do you think these people are and what are their relationships to one another? What are the ages of the people in the photograph?

- 2) What are the people in the photo wearing? Does their clothing tell you anything about them? Does the clothing tell you anything about when (what year) this photo was taken?

- 3) What do you think is being celebrated in the photograph? What kinds of food and drink are on the table?

- 4) Describe the facial expressions of the people in the photograph. Do they seem happy?

Photograph Setting:

- 5) Where was this photograph taken? Describe as many details as you can that will help you identify the photo's setting.

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1G

Photo #7

Subject of Photograph:

1. What is this photograph documenting?
2. Where was this photograph taken?
3. When was it taken?
4. What are the ages of the people in the photograph?
5. What can you tell about the people in the photograph based on how they are dressed?
6. What can you tell about them based on their facial expressions?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #1H

Photo #8

Subject of Photograph:

- 1) What is this photograph documenting?

- 2) Where do you think that this photograph was taken?

- 3) When was it taken?

- 4) What can you tell about the girls in the photograph based on how they are dressed?

- 5) What are they doing in the photograph?

- 6) What can you tell about them based on their facial expressions?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

Student Resource Sheet #11

Photo #9

Subject of Photograph:

- 1) What is this photograph documenting?

- 2) Where do you think that this photograph was taken?

- 3) When was it taken?

- 4) What can you tell about the people in this photograph based on the way that they are dressed?

- 5) What can you tell about them based on their facial expressions?

A caption is a short description or explanation of a photograph. Using the information gathered above, write a caption for this photo.

LESSON PLAN II

Student Resource Sheet #2

Oral History Quotes

"We were probably as much German as we were Jews, perhaps more German than Jew."

Henry Eisner – arrived in Baltimore in 1937

"We grew up together [with non-Jews]. We were very assimilated. We were Germans first, and our religion was Jewish."

Toni Weil Mandel – arrived in Baltimore in April 1940

"The trouble in Germany was things didn't happen suddenly. It was a little and a little and a little, and you can always take a little more and a little more."

Toni Weil Mandel

"At the park I was told, 'I'm sorry, here's your money back. We can't let you skate because you're Jewish.'"

Harry Kulp – arrived in Baltimore in September 1939 at age 9

"My father assumed the Nazi party was one of the passing parade of German governments and he didn't think it would be in power very long. . . . He had a substantial business and he wasn't about to leave it to go to a land whose language he didn't speak and whose customs he wasn't familiar with."

Arnold Fleischmann – arrived in Baltimore in February 1940

"The brownshirts would march by our apartment singing antisemitic songs. The windows of the stores were smeared with tar, informing people that this was a Jewish business. The brownshirts were stationed in front of the store, and they took pictures and they prevented customers from going in."

Martha Meier Weiman – arrived in Baltimore in December 1939

"One by one, the children joined the Hitler Youth, and one by one, they stopped talking to me. These were boys I had known all my life."

Ralph Brunn – arrived in Baltimore in December 1938

"I knew something was happening, because the fire department was only a block away... and no one came to put out the fire [during Kristallnacht]."

Toni Weil Mandel

"Now we had no one – no relatives, no friends, we didn't know anybody. So we wrote letters all over the United States, we wrote to synagogues and authorities [in an effort to get a signed affidavit]. Most of the time we never heard from them."

Toni Weil Mandel

"My dad went from one consulate to the other seeking to emigrate to just any country outside of Europe. He was determined to get out of Europe."

Henry Cohen – arrived in Baltimore in July 1940

“One day my mother told me that I was going to go to America. I really didn’t know what she meant by that. She said it was far away and that I would have a new mother to take care of me.”

Herta Griffel Baitch, who was seven years old in November 1940 when her mother sent her to safety in Baltimore

“And we stood there on the boat, the three of us, no one to pick us up, no relatives, no strangers, no one, and we thought we could really jump overboard and no one would ever miss us.”

Toni Weil Mandel

“My father was sick the whole time until he saw the Statue of Liberty. And when he saw land, the Statue of Liberty, his sickness went.”

Susanne Wollenberg Sachs – arrived in Baltimore in April 1941

“When you were a on boat you wanted to forget. The misery was behind you.”

Harry Rosenbach – arrived in Baltimore in February 1940

“For the first time in many years I could breathe freely. I didn’t have to worry about what I said, what I did, how I dressed, how I walked. I was a human being again.”

Ruth Prager Cohen – arrived in Baltimore in April 1940

“He’d go to Mt. Washington, because that was the country in those days. There were a lot of wealthy Jews who lived in Mt. Washington, and he would cut the grass. Now, mind you, this man was 50 years old and couldn’t speak any English, and that’s what he was doing after being a businessman. But it was a job, it was a job.”

Martha Meier Weiman

“I landed in New York on a Friday morning, came to Baltimore on a Sunday night, started school on Tuesday morning, and never had an English lesson.”

Eric Beissinger

“I went to a lot of pains to be like my classmates were. I was never too thrilled to have them come to my house, because their mothers weren’t slaving away at a sewing machine in the basement, and their parents didn’t speak with heavy accents, and they didn’t bring weird things to school for lunch.”

Martha Meier Weiman

“I grew up not really knowing my position in the family. I was a daughter, and yet I wasn’t a daughter. It was very hard. . . . I always felt that I grew up on my own. I felt secure, that I was safe, but there wasn’t the love, the obvious love and the tenderness.”

Herta Griffel Baitch

“We compared what we had over there to what we had here. Everybody had to lower themselves, and it wasn’t easy.”

Edith Baneman Goldschmitt

“When the war broke out I felt it was my duty to volunteer, but I was turned down as an enemy alien. They pointed out to me that I was – according to *them* I was – a German citizen. Of course, according to Germany, I certainly was not. But a few weeks later, I got a draft letter and I was drafted. This didn’t bother them somehow.”

Ernest Lowenstein – arrived in Baltimore in September 1939

When I think about my life, I have to balance the terrible things that happened to family members – and there are so many of them that were slaughtered by the Nazis – against what happened to me, and how I just rushed against that Holocaust violence, and escaped it, and had a very wonderful life here.

Henry Silbermann

Student Resource Sheet #3

Story Beginnings

- 1) I am alone. My mother and father put me on a ship to America, and I left my life, my parents, my brothers and sisters behind. My future is unsure, but I hope...

- 2) Following Kristallnacht, I felt the need to leave Germany with all haste. For that reason, I was unable to take all but one item from my past. I took _____ because...

- 3) I have just three months ago arrived in America from my life in Germany. Already, I see that my new country is not without anti-Semitism. Worse, I have only now been drafted to go back and fight the Nazis. About this, I feel so many ways...

LESSON PLAN III

Teacher Resource Sheet #5

Immigration Laws and Policies
List of Internet Resources*

- US Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
www.state.gov/g/prm/
- US Citizenship and Immigration Service
www.uscis.gov/graphics/lawsregs/index.htm
- American Immigration Law Foundation
www.aif.org
- Institute for Immigration Policy Review
www.iipr
- Close Up Foundation
www.closeup.org/immigrat.htm
- Center for Immigration Studies
www.cis.org
- National Immigration Forum
www.immigrationforum.org

*Please note that these websites promote a variety of opinions and are not meant to reflect the Jewish Museum of Maryland's stance on this issue. The intent is to give students the opportunity to gather many perspectives on the issue of immigration policy so that they can have an informed debate.

Additional Resources

For more extensive resources on Holocaust history, contact:

- The Center for Jewish Education (CJE) at (410) 735-5000. The Teacher Resource Center of the CJE located at 5708 Park Heights Avenue contains textbooks, curricular guides, and other educational materials that are available for educators.
- The Baltimore Jewish Council can make arrangements for a Holocaust survivor to speak to your class. For more information, call Deborah Caplan at (410) 542-4850.
- The United States Memorial Holocaust Museum has extensive resources for teachers (see suggested websites listed below). For more information call 202-488-0400

Books:

- Aciman, Andre (editor), Letters of Transit: Reflections on Exile and Memory, New Press, 1999.
- Baumel, Judith Tydor, Unfulfilled Promise: Rescue and Resettlement of Jewish Children in the United States, 1934-1945, Denali Press, 1990.
- Breitman, Richard and Alan M. Kraut, American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1941, Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Gilbert, Martin, The Holocaust: Maps and Photographs, Braun Center for Holocaust Studies, 1994.
- Kaplan, Marion, Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany, Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Kassof, Anita, Avi Decter and Deborah R. Weiner (editors), Lives Lost, Lives Found: Baltimore's German Jewish Refugees, 1933-1945, The Jewish Museum of Maryland, 2004. Exhibition catalog. (a copy of this catalog is included in this kit)
- Shulman, William L. (editor), Educational Resource Guide on the Holocaust: A Selected Bibliography and Audio-Visual Catalogue, Holocaust Resource Center and Archives, 1999. Bibliographic resource.
- Szonyi, David M. (editor), The Holocaust: An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide, Ktav Publishing House, 1985. Bibliographic resource.

Websites:

- www.ushmm.org - The website for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. This site contains on-line teacher resource materials and extensive historical information.
- www.holocaust-trc.org - The Holocaust Teacher Resource Center. This site contains a number of lesson plans on the topic of Holocaust history.
- www.vhf.org - Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation website. Includes lesson plans and resources for teachers
- www.facinghistory.org – Facing History and Ourselves website. Devoted to promoting tolerance by exposing students to past instances of discrimination, including the Holocaust.