



My Survivor

FILM DISCUSSION GUIDE

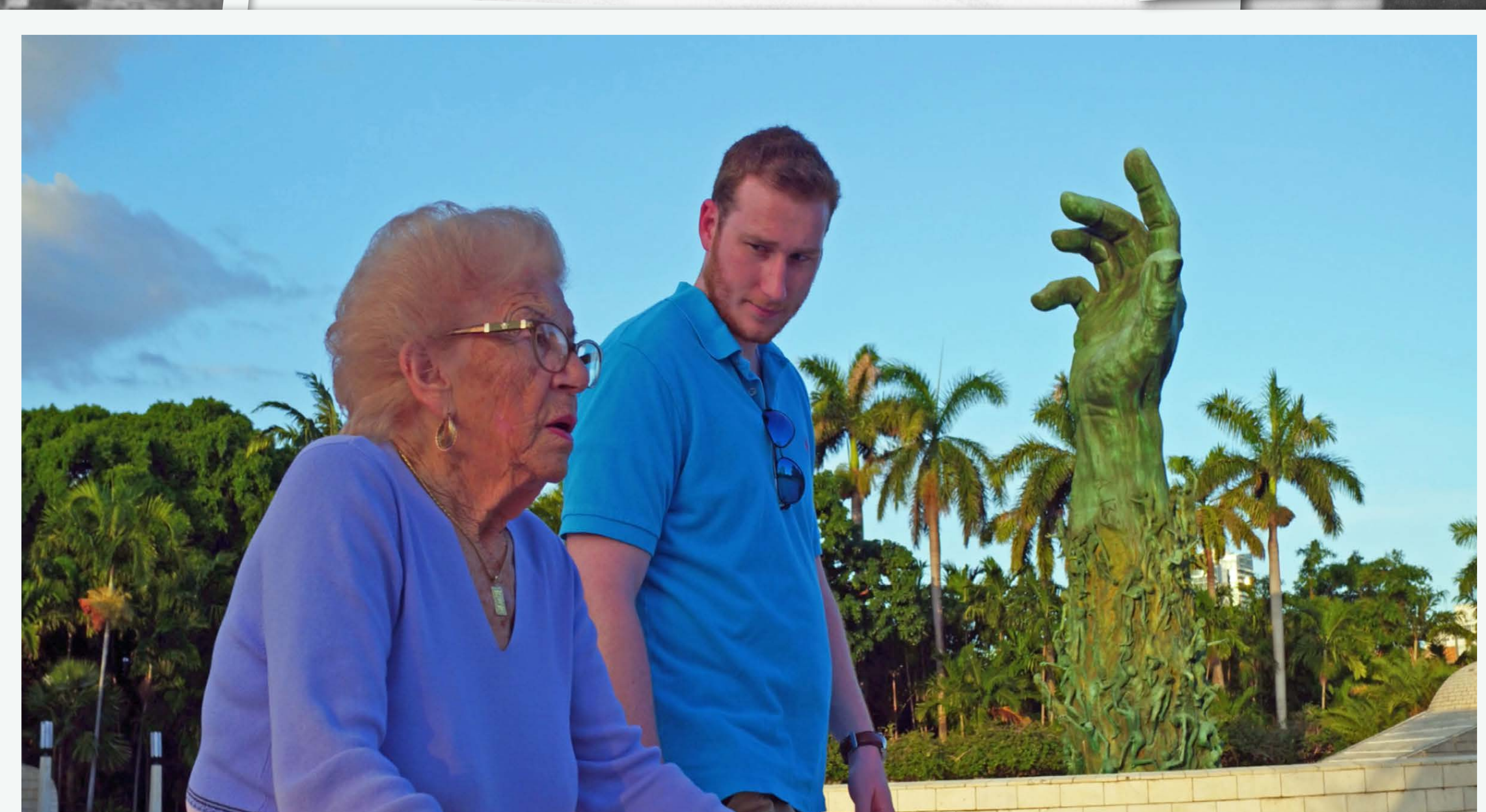


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ABOUT THE FILM

Who will tell the story when the last survivor is gone? As we approach the end of the last generation of Holocaust survivors, the world is confronted by this haunting - and sadly - ultimate question. *My Survivor* takes a fresh look at this inevitable reality by exploring the life-changing experiences of some of the five hundred University of Miami



students who participated in a landmark educational initiative. This dynamic group of young adults learned about the Holocaust through the intimate intergenerational relationships they forged with members of this remarkable, but rapidly disappearing survivor population. Launched in the spring of 2004, The University of Miami's Holocaust Survivors Student Internship Program paired university students with Holocaust survivors to create a core of young adults committed to learning about the Holocaust while providing friendship and support to this singular but aging population. For most of the students, it was the first time they had ever met a Holocaust survivor or formed a meaningful friendship with someone of advanced age. In their own words, this year-long experience of intimate visits, group meetings, revealing conversations, and shared meals proved to be the most significant of their college years. The Holocaust Survivors Student Internship Program was initiated by the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, in collaboration with the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, and the George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies. The program ended in May of 2016, as the number of survivors with the capacity to participate dwindled.

ABOUT THE FILM (cont.)

My Survivor takes the viewer on a journey, revealing the strong and sometimes surprising emotional bonds that developed between this group of diverse students and the survivors they came to love and respect. Woven together with in-depth interviews, dramatic historic and contemporary news footage, and unforgettable location filming, *My Survivor* tells a compelling story. It reveals how college students came to be a strong voice against Holocaust denial and hate, standing as witnesses to history and embracing the survivors' pleas that the memory and the lessons of the Holocaust live on - when the last survivor is gone.



RECOMMENDED AUDIENCES

My Survivor documents a unique internship at the University of Miami, which paired college students with Holocaust survivors over the course of a full academic year. The resulting conversations explore complex issues that are rooted in the complicated and traumatic history of the Holocaust. Topics such as family separations, extermination camps, witnessing the deaths of loved ones, forced death marches, and others are discussed, and some disturbing archival images are shown - and therefore, this film may be challenging for younger viewers. *My Survivor* is an ideal film to begin an informed dialogue about history, the power and strength of the individual, current events, and personal responsibility. It is recommended for middle school aged students and older, and can be used with young adult and adult audiences alike. This film provides an opportunity for families, classroom educators, and community organizers to explore many important issues, including history, the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, antibias education, intergenerational communication, genocide education, and diversity education. Particularly for educators, the film also fits into a number of traditional subject areas, including civics, world history, art, media studies and media literacy, language arts, world cultures, and social studies, just to name a few.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide was created with communities and students in mind and can be used in a variety of ways both in the classroom as well as informal educational settings like library events, family workshops, after-school programs, community screenings, or professional development sessions. The film has a running time of 57 minutes. To provide context, this Guide includes some very cursory background information on the history, and some of the different experiences represented in the film.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE (cont.)

The Context and Facilitation Strategies provide a framework for showing the film in its entirety, including conversation starters that can be used before watching the film and afterwards, to provide an opportunity for analysis and making connections. The section of Classroom Activities provides more specific classroom procedures that drill down into some of the important themes and topics that the film presents, making connections to national curriculum standards for a variety of courses. There is a section containing Questions for Further Discussion that can be used for classroom dialogue or a post-viewing Q&A.



ABOUT THE HISTORY



The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. "Holocaust" is a word of Greek origin meaning "sacrifice by fire." The Nazis, who came to power in Germany in January 1933, believed that Germans were "racially superior" and that the Jews, deemed "inferior," were an alien threat to the so-called German racial community. In 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stood at over nine million. Most European Jews lived in countries that Nazi Germany would occupy or influence during World War II. By 1945, the Germans and their collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of the "Final Solution," the Nazi policy to murder the

Jews of Europe. During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also targeted other groups because of their perceived "racial inferiority": Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), the disabled, and some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others). Other groups were persecuted on political, ideological, and behavioral grounds, among them Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and homosexuals. In total, approximately twelve million people were killed.



ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HITLER YOUTH

The Hitler Youth began in 1926 and was the youth organization of the Germany Nazi Party. The mission of the Hitler Youth was to develop Aryan, race conscious, obedient, self-sacrificing Germans who would die for Hitler and the German Fatherland. Complete devotion to Adolf Hitler was a crucial part of their training, as it was designed to indoctrinate young Germans into Hitler's Nazi ideology, and to prepare them to serve in the SS (the Schutzstaffel, or Elite Nazi guard). In 1933, after Hitler was declared Chancellor of Germany, the Nazis began eliminating all competing youth programs, and by 1939 Hitler had made participation in the Hitler Youth (and the associated League of German Girls program) mandatory. Hitler's "Law Concerning the Hitler Youth" mandated that all young, non-Jewish Germans would "be educated physically, intellectually and morally in the spirit of National Socialism" starting at the age of ten. Parents who refused to allow their children to join the Hitler Youth were punished with long prison sentences. Nazi propaganda emphasized that the Nazi Party was a youthful, contemporary movement with hopeful, inspiring, upbeat, and optimistic messages for the future - and the Hitler Youth illustrated these claims. However, as the war accelerated, thousands of these youths - poorly equipped and inadequately trained - joined German forces, fighting and dying on the streets of Germany.

GHETTOS

Nazis established ghettos, or segregated living spaces, as an early way for the Nazis to isolate and contain the Jewish population. Jews were forced to give up their homes and possessions when they were transported into ghettos. Initially, ghettos were intended to be temporary holding places for large numbers of

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

GHETTOS (CONT.)

Jews until they could be expelled from German occupied territories. For this reason, they were often established near railway lines for easy transport. Once the Jews were contained in ghettos, the Nazis forced them to establish councils of Jewish Leaders (Judenrat) to oversee these ghetto communities. Local authorities and Jewish Councils



determined how life in each ghetto worked, so no two ghettos were the same. Under the leadership of the Jewish Council, the ghettos were able to maintain some sense of community and normalcy with religious, educational, and cultural programs and medical services. Despite these efforts, the harsh Nazi treatment, combined with the large number of people crammed into limited space with limited sanitation and resources, caused widespread disease, starvation, and death. Eventually, there were over one thousand ghettos throughout Eastern Europe. As the numbers of people in the ghettos grew to the millions, the question of what to do with the segregated Jews became critical. It was at this point that the Nazis began a new policy of the mass extermination of the Jews. In a massively scaled coordinated effort, the Nazis began sending ghetto residents to extermination camps, forced labor camps and concentration camps.

ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HIDDEN CHILDREN

When World War II began in 1939, there were approximately 1.6 million Jewish children living in the territories that the Nazis or their allies would occupy during the war. By the end of the war, it is estimated that between 1 million and 1.5 million Jewish children were dead. Among the small number of children who remained were thousands of children who survived the war only because they were hidden. Sometimes they were physically hidden (for example, under the floorboards or in a secret room or piece of furniture), and other times they were hidden in plain sight by disguising their real identities. Regardless, almost all hidden children lived in constant fear and danger. Many parents sent their children into hiding with Christian families or religious institutions, hoping they could survive the war by passing as non-Jews. Some of these children were abandoned. Some were moved from hiding place to hiding place in order to keep them hidden and safe. Some were adopted by the non-Jewish families who hid them. At the end of WWII, many of these children weren't told who they really were, and consequently were never reunited with surviving parents or relatives, leaving them with deep, traumatic psychological scars.

EINSATZGRUPPEN (MOBILE KILLING UNITS)

The Einsatzgruppen were groups of Nazi Schutzstaffel soldiers who traveled through Eastern Europe serving as paramilitary death squads. The Schutzstaffel, or SS, were the Nazi soldiers specifically charged with the leadership of the "Final Solution," or the systematic murder of European Jews. As part of the Einsatzgruppen, these SS soldiers were responsible for gruesome mass shootings throughout German-occupied Europe during WWII. They patrolled the

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

EINSATZGRUPPEN (MOBILE KILLING UNITS) (CONT.)

countryside, invading small towns, cities, and villages. As they passed through, they would forcibly remove all the Jewish citizens from their homes, march them at gunpoint to nearby fields, and shoot them, one by one, leaving them buried in mass graves -- large ditches that the Jews themselves were often forced to dig before they were killed. In addition to approximately 1.5 million Jewish men, women, and children, the Einsatzgruppen murdered the intelligentsia and cultural elite, members of the Catholic priesthood, Soviet officers, Roma and Sinti people (Gypsies), and actual or alleged partisans, or members of the resistance. In 1941, during the Soviet invasion, four Einsatzgruppen, each made up of 500 to 1,000 SS troops, were ordered to follow the German army and charged with the "special task" of executing all the Soviet officials, political opponents, and Jewish men, women and children they could find.

NAZI CAMPS: CONCENTRATION, FORCED LABOR, AND EXTERMINATION (DEATH)



From 1933 to 1945, Nazi Germany and its allies established more than 44,000 camps, ghettos and incarceration sites throughout Germany and Eastern Europe. These camps were used for forced labor, to hold political prisoners, and for mass murder. The Nazis used a variety of types of camps, each with different purposes, to persecute, control and murder their prisoners. Hitler put

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

NAZI CAMPS: CONCENTRATION, FORCED LABOR, AND EXTERMINATION (DEATH) (CONT.)

SS leader Heinrich Himmler in charge of developing a centralized camp management system to oversee the efficient running of the camps.

One type of camp was the concentration camp. This term is often misused to represent all of the different types of Nazi camps. By definition, it refers to a place where large numbers of people were concentrated, detained, confined and imprisoned, under terrible conditions and without concern for accepted legal standards for arrest, trial, and imprisonment. Concentration camps are often inaccurately compared to modern day prisons. The main difference between a concentration camp and a prison is the lack of prisoner convictions and legal proceedings. Nazi camp prisoners were exploited for manual labor, working long hours at hard physical labor, without adequate food, water, or medical treatment. They were abused and tortured without concern for their lives or health, resulting in untold deaths. Concentration camps were one of the ways that Nazi Germany contained prisoners in one place while it imposed and maintained its control over the general population.

Another type of camp was a forced labor camp. Shortly after Hitler's rise to power, the Nazis started violently rounding up prisoners and moving them to forced labor camps. Starting in 1942, Soviet POWs (prisoners of war) and millions of Soviet citizens were deported to work in these labor camps, which provided a necessary and free workforce to the Nazi war machine. The conditions in the forced labor camps were horrific, with people literally being worked to death. "Annihilation through work" was the official policy, with prisoners forced to work under conditions that would directly and deliberately lead to illness, injury, and death.

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

NAZI CAMPS: CONCENTRATION, FORCED LABOR, AND EXTERMINATION (DEATH) (CONT.)

Unknown numbers of people died in forced labor camps from disease, starvation, and abuse. Forced labor camps were distinctly separate and different from the SS-controlled concentration camps at which prisoners were also forced to perform slave labor, but whose main purpose was to contain and kill, rather than extort support for the Nazi military.

Undoubtedly, the most terrifying of all the Nazi camps were the extermination camps. Initially, the official Nazi policy was to force Jews to leave all German-occupied European territories. But in 1942, immediately following the Wannsee Conference, this policy changed dramatically. It was at this conference where the term “Final Solution” was coined, along with a plan to undertake a systematic mass murder of 11 million Jews. At first, the Nazis used mobile gas vans to murder their victims by carbon monoxide poisoning. Victims were then driven to a nearby forest and buried in mass graves. Soon thereafter, for efficiency, the Nazis began building stationary gas chambers instead. Perhaps the most infamous of these were the gas chambers built at the six extermination camps they established in Poland. Unlike concentration camps, extermination camps had no forced labor, and very few barracks. Their only purpose was the efficient, assembly line mass murder of Jews. For this reason, very few people survived these camps - only those few who were selected to work at the camp itself, providing the necessary labor to keep the camp running. Some of these people were able to escape, and their stories provide some of the very little information we have about what happened there.

The camps that the survivors in *My Survivor* experienced included Auschwitz, Birkenau, Bergen-Belsen, Ohrdruf, Wöbbelin, Theresienstadt, Dachau, Mauthausen, Tannenberg, Goerlitz, and Stutthof.

ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

DEATH MARCHES

By late 1944, Nazi command and German citizens were increasingly aware that they had lost the war. Even so, the Nazi killing machine did not slow. Instead, as Allied soldiers approached, the Nazis continued to murder their victims, sometimes at an increased pace. They moved thousands of prisoners deeper into Germany, away from the battlefield, and continued to use healthier prisoners as slave labor. The Nazis called this movement “forced evacuations,” but to the victims, they became known as death marches. During the brutal, cold winter months of late 1944 and 1945, prisoners were forced to march by foot through mud and snow, wearing only thin, worn prisoner uniforms, sometimes without shoes. The marches went on for days, with very little, if any, food or supplies. Sick and exhausted prisoners who fell by the side of the road were shot and killed. Sometimes the SS guards murdered

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

DEATH MARCHES (CONT.)

all of their prisoners or they were murdered by locals as they marched through a small town or village. Many of these death marches began just days before the Allied Forces arrived to liberate a camp, so that prisoners who might have been liberated, died or were killed as they marched.

DP (DISPLACED PERSONS) CAMPS

From the end of the war in 1945 until 1952, more than 250,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors lived in DP (displaced persons) camps throughout Germany, Austria, and Italy. These camps were run by the Allied authorities and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). Many of the displaced persons were liberated from Nazi camps or had survived death marches, and were therefore sick, malnourished, and often near death. They didn't know if any of their friends or family had survived - and if they had, where they were. In addition, many of the cities and towns of Eastern Europe had been destroyed in the war, and the ones that were left were populated by the same neighbors who had more often than not been Nazis or Nazi collaborators during the war. For all these reasons, Jewish survivors feared for their lives and had no homes to return to. DP camps provided a safe place to live with access to food, rehabilitation, and medicine. The UNRRA also established the Central Tracing Bureau - a system to help families reunite with one another, by notifying people when a relative was located. Survivors established schools, synagogues, and religious schools in the displaced persons camps and transformed them into active educational, cultural, and social centers. Many of the survivors in the DP camps were influential in the creation of a Jewish state in Israel.

ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

For more information about the Holocaust and the specific experiences referenced in *My Survivor*, visit:

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/en>

www.yadvashem.org

<https://sfi.usc.edu/watch>

HOLOCAUST DENIAL



Holocaust denial, or Holocaust distortion, is the attempt to discredit the established and indisputable facts of Nazi Germany's genocide of European Jews. It is the claim that the Holocaust was invented or exaggerated by Jews to bolster their agenda. These false statements only serve to perpetuate anti-Semitism. Holocaust denial is dangerous, not only to the Jewish community, but to all people - because when historical truth is undermined, subjective agendas, lies, and biases can be promoted in its stead. Despite tens of thousands of living witnesses and vast quantities

of records, many kept by the Nazis themselves, over time Holocaust denial started to be taken more seriously. Holocaust denial has become a critical part of the Neo-Nazi, white supremacist, and Ku Klux Klan movements. In October 2020, the popular social media forums Facebook and Twitter announced that they will ban and remove all posts that deny or distort the Holocaust.

ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HOLOCAUST DENIAL (CONT.)

Holocaust Denial on Trial: Irving v. Penguin Books Ltd. and Deborah Lipstadt

In 1993, Emory University Professor, Dr. Deborah Lipstadt (featured in *My Survivor*) wrote the book *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. Lipstadt's book exposed the lies, falsifications, and political agendas of



those who promote revisionist history and Holocaust denial by examining specific Holocaust deniers, including writer David Irving. In his writing, Irving contended that Hitler did not know about the plan to exterminate the Jews, that there were no mass gassings of Jews, and that there wasn't a central plan for the mass murders of Jews. He alleged that most of the evidence of Nazi Germany war crimes and mass murder were fabricated after the war. Lipstadt described David Irving as a "dangerous spokesperson" for Holocaust denial. In 1996, Irving sued Lipstadt and her British publisher, Penguin Books Ltd., for libel. He alleged that his reputation as a historian was defamed and that his ability to earn a living was affected. Irving filed his lawsuit in the UK, where libel laws are more favorable towards plaintiffs and the burden of proof rests with the defendant. In April 2000, Judge Charles Gray reached his judgment in favor of Lipstadt and Penguin Books Ltd. In his ruling, Judge Gray found that Irving was an active Holocaust denier, that he was anti-Semitic and racist, and that he associated with right-wing extremists who promoted neo-Nazism. He also found that Irving had "significantly misrepresented,

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HOLOCAUST DENIAL (CONT.)

Holocaust Denial on Trial:

Irving v. Penguin Books Ltd. and Deborah Lipstadt (cont.)

misconstrued, omitted, mistranslated, misread, and applied double standards to the historical evidence in order to achieve his ideological presentation of history.” Judge Gray’s powerful judgement was upheld in the Court of Appeals.

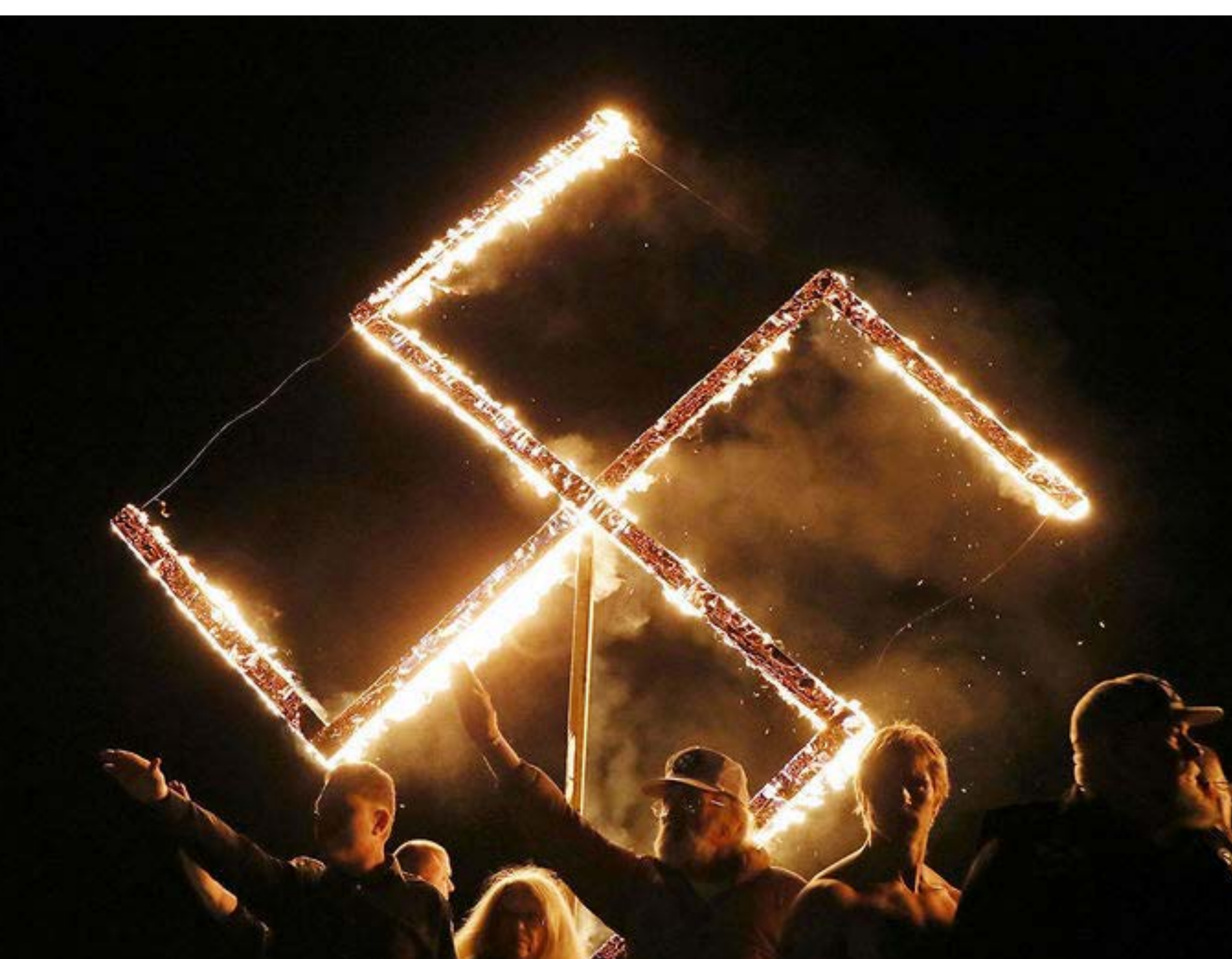
For more information about Holocaust denial, visit:

<https://www.hdot.org/resources/>

<https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/holocaust-denial-and-distortion>

<http://www.museumoftolerance.com/education/teacher-resources/holocaust-resources/what-is-holocaust-denial.html>

HATE, RACISM, AND ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY



Anti-Semitism is defined as “prejudice against, or hatred of, Jewish people” that can often be traced back to generations-old stereotypes and myths about Judaism and the Jewish community. Often, people who believe in anti-Semitic hate ideologies also hate other marginalized or minority groups. Anti-Semitism can manifest itself in many ways, from discrimination and

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ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HATE, RACISM, AND ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY (CONT.)

stereotyping, to exclusion and acts of violence perpetrated against Jewish people just because they are Jewish. Anti-Semitism is: bullying, humiliation, or the use of hate speech, hate symbols, and swastikas - online or in person; name calling, sharing of false or biased information, mocking, and hate speech - online or in person; destruction and vandalism of synagogues, Jewish community property, or Jewish cemeteries; or violent attacks on people who are Jewish. Currently, the socio-political climate - both in the United States and globally - is becoming increasingly polarized. This, combined with the Internet and social media which have normalized anti-Semitism and given a platform to hate filled ideologies, has created a perfect breeding ground for anti-Semitism. This trend brings with it an increase in violence worldwide - anti-Semitic incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism are now at almost historic levels not seen since the Holocaust.

Unite the Right Rally

In August 2017, a large rally with people from different anti-Semitic, racist, and extremist hate groups descended on Charlottesville, Virginia for two days. The stated purpose of the rally was to protest the removal of Civil War Confederate statues. The demonstrators showed their hatred to both the Jewish and Black communities, using the rally to promote their white supremacist beliefs. Marchers wore Adolf Hitler shirts and quoted Nazi phrases, chanting "Jews will not replace us." They carried signs and banners with swastikas and Nazi slogans like "blood and soil." The demonstrators made a direct connection between African Americans and Jews. This rally showed that anti-Semitism can be found anywhere and that hatred towards Jews can be included in any and all forms of bigotry. Charlottesville proved that anti-Semitism is the common language that links all hate groups together. The visual images from this rally are reminiscent of the early Nazi propaganda marches, which are used as a disturbing model for modern white supremacist extremist groups.

ABOUT THE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES REFERENCED IN THE FILM

HATE, RACISM, AND ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY (CONT.)

Tree of Life Synagogue

On October 27, 2018, during the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, a white supremacist gunman entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA. He yelled “all Jews must die” and opened fire on the congregants during their worship service. The gunman was armed with

an assault rifle and several handguns. He killed eleven congregants and wounded six others, including four police officers. While surrendering to police, the gunman said that he “wanted all Jews to die” and that Jews “were committing genocide against his people.” In social media posts, the gunman blamed Jews for bringing immigrants into the United States. The attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue is the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in United States history.



For more information about anti-Semitism, visit:

www.ADL.org

www.facinghistory.org

www.tolerance.org

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING ABOUT GENOCIDE AND MASS ATROCITY CRIMES

The guidelines below are adapted from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum guidelines and are general recommendations for how to teach about genocide.

- 1 Define genocide.** This is not an easy, nor an uncontroversial task. However, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide in the following terms:

"Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

- 2 Investigate the context and dynamics that have led to genocide.** A study of genocide should explore the steps undertaken in a society that lead to genocide. Analyze the various factors and patterns that may play a role in the early stages: political considerations, economic difficulties, local history and context, deeply seeded prejudices, etc. – but also emphasize that there is no one set pattern or predictable list of preliminary stages that lead to mass murder. As your group learns of the early phases of genocide, have them consider how steps and causal conditions may have been deflected or minimized. Have audience members think about scope, intent, and tactics.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING ABOUT GENOCIDE AND MASS ATROCITY CRIMES (CONT.)

- 3 Be wary of simplistic parallels to other genocides.** Each genocide has its own unique characteristics of time, place, people, and methods employed. It is easy to try to force comparisons, so be sure to stress the pain and specifics of a particular community at a particular time and place. Careful comparisons could be made in the "tactics" or procedures utilized by oppressors to destroy the communities, but one should avoid comparing the pain and suffering of individuals.
- 4 Analyze American and world response.** An important goal in studying all aspects of genocide is to learn from mistakes and apply these lessons for future action. To do this, we must strive to understand not only what was done, or not done, in the past but also why action was or was not taken. As with any historical event, particularly genocide, it is important to present the facts.
- 5 Illustrate positive actions taken by individuals and nations in the face of genocide.** One reason that genocide occurs could be the complicity of bystanders within the nation and around the world. However, in each genocide, there have been individuals who have spoken out against the oppressive regime and/or rescued threatened people. These have been persons at risk inside the country as well as external observers or stakeholders. There are always a few who stand up to face evil with tremendous acts of courage – and sometimes very small acts of courage, of no less importance.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING ABOUT GENOCIDE AND MASS ATROCITY CRIMES (CONT.)

For more information on teaching about genocide, visit:

www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust

www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/

www.facinghistory.org/resources/collections/genocide



CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

Whether you'll be showing the film to a larger group, such as at a campus or after school event, or for a smaller one, like an in-classroom presentation, you'll want to provide facilitation and context that supports the viewing of the film. You can use the following pre- and post-viewing guidelines to help.

PREPARING FOR A DISCUSSION

Before showing the film to any audience, watch the film yourself. Consider and take note of places that would be good to stop the film for interim discussions. In addition, consider and create a list of the film's main points. These points might include, among others:

- The insidious and anti-Semitic nature of Holocaust denial: what it is, why it is important, and what is its impact - on survivors, other individuals, and society at large
- The psychological impact on an individual when they survive or escape a genocide or mass atrocity
- The personal and societal value of intergenerational relationships and communication
- The devastating outcomes that occur when hate goes unchecked - and the necessity for upstanders, resisters, and allies
- The importance of personal narrative and family history as a lens through which one understands the world

CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

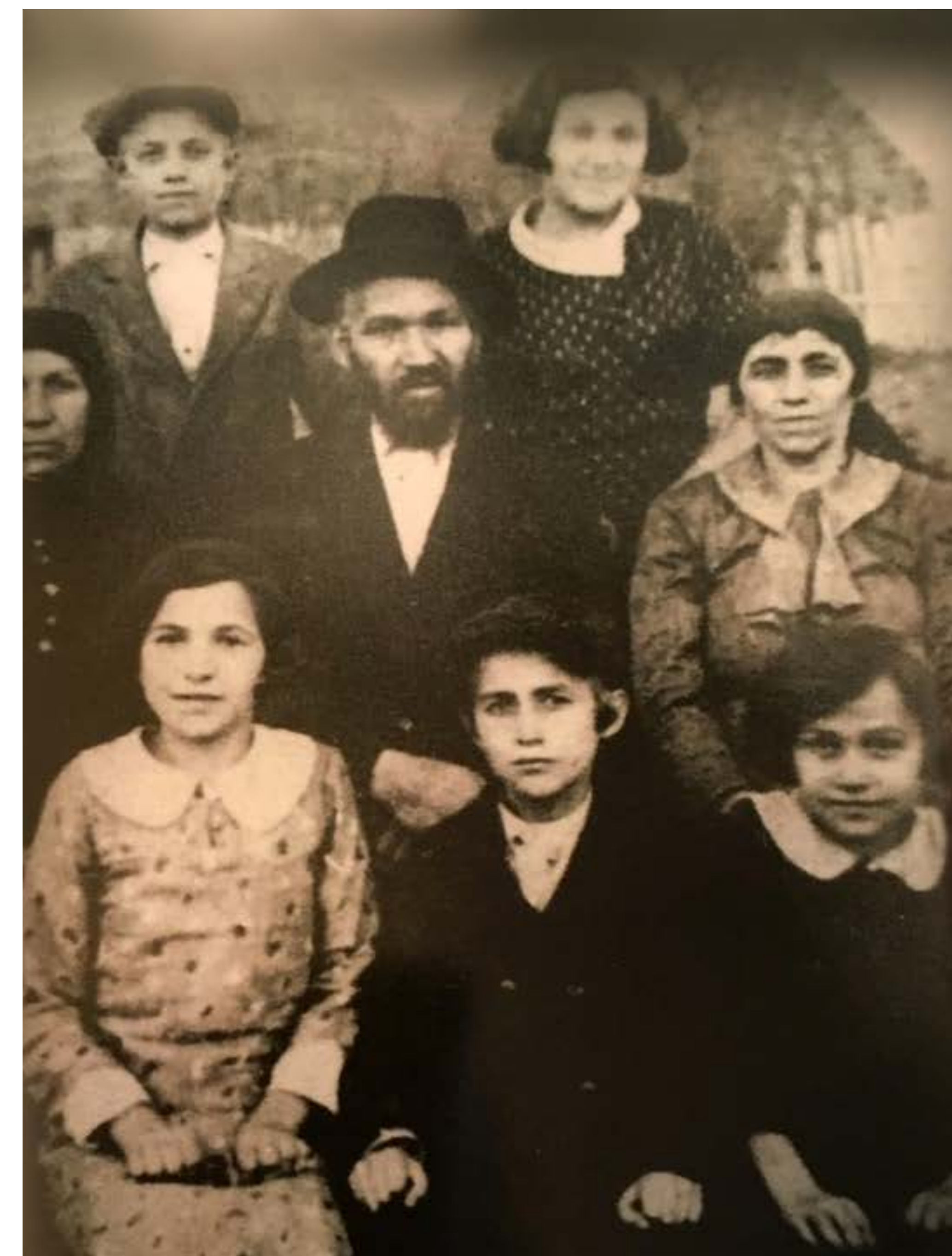
PREPARING FOR A DISCUSSION (CONT.)

- The power of resilience, perseverance, and hope - particularly in the face of overwhelming adversity
- The impact and legacy of genocide on individuals, families, societies, and cultures – both immediately and over time

PRE-VIEWING THOUGHT PROMPTS

Use some or all of the following questions to start your audiences thinking about the issues before they watch the film.

- What do you know about the Holocaust and World War II? Where did you learn this information?
- What questions do you have about the Holocaust?
- Have you ever met, or do you know, a Holocaust survivor?
- What is your family's history and cultural narrative? Who has shared your family story with you?
- Do you have any genocide survivors, or survivors of a mass atrocity, in your family? How do you feel about your personal history?



CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

PRE- VIEWING THOUGHT PROMPTS (CONT.)



- How would you feel if a group of people publicly denied your family's history? What impact would that have on you?
 - Do you know any survivors of a genocide, or mass atrocity, or descendants of survivors? Have you ever spoken to them about their experience?
 - Have you ever spoken to, or visited with, the "elders" in your community - in your church, synagogue, extended family, or on your block or in your neighborhood? How well do you know your elders?
-
- What do you think you could learn from older generations that you couldn't learn from a book?
 - What does the Holocaust have to do with current events?

NOTE: Some of these questions may provide an opportunity to highlight the African American and Native American experience as victims of mass atrocities, systemic bias, and crimes against humanity at the hands of European Americans throughout our country's history.

CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

PRE- VIEWING THOUGHT PROMPTS (CONT.)

For more context and guidance on facilitating a discussion about the United States' history of race related mass atrocity crimes, visit:

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/>

<https://www.tolerance.org/>

<https://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/for-teachers/>



CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER FOR ACTIVE VIEWING

Use the following graphic organizer to encourage viewers to engage with the content as they watch. Recreate the following table and distribute as a handout, draw it on a white board or chart paper, or instruct students to recreate it in their notebooks or on notepaper. In the column on the left are the various categories of characters represented in the film. At the bottom of the column is a row for “self” or “viewer.” Across the top are categories of information that can be gleaned from the film. Instruct viewers to make notes in the appropriate square when they see people in the film communicating each category of information. For example, when a survivor shares fact-based information about their life experience, it would be listed in the first row, in the corresponding column. When a student shares a moment when they made a personal connection, or when they shared their vision for the future, those would be noted in the second row, and corresponding column. When viewers learn something, or make a personal connection, they should indicate that in the bottom row, in the corresponding column. Encourage viewers to log at least one example from the film in each box.

	Information, Knowledge, or Data	Life stories, Emotional responses, Personal narratives, or Subjective Connections	Vision for the future, Wishes, Dreams, or Outcomes/ Impact
Survivors			
Students			
Historians/ Teachers			
Viewer (Self)			

CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

POST-VIEWING DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Use some or all of the following questions to guide your post-viewing discussion. For a list of more in depth questions, refer to the Questions for Further Discussion section of this Guide.

- What did you learn about the Holocaust from watching this film?
- What did this film teach you about how hate can take hold in a society in little ways - and grow out of control?
- What did you learn about being an upstander vs. being a bystander by watching this film?
- What did you learn about the power of personal narrative - both for the sharer/ speaker and the listener - from watching this film?
- How did watching the film lead you to think about, or think differently about, your family's history?
- How has your attitude about older people changed based on this film?
- What did you learn about Holocaust denial from watching this film?
- What did you learn about the dangers of historical revisionism from watching this film?

CONTEXT AND FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR SHOWING *MY SURVIVOR* IN THE CLASSROOM

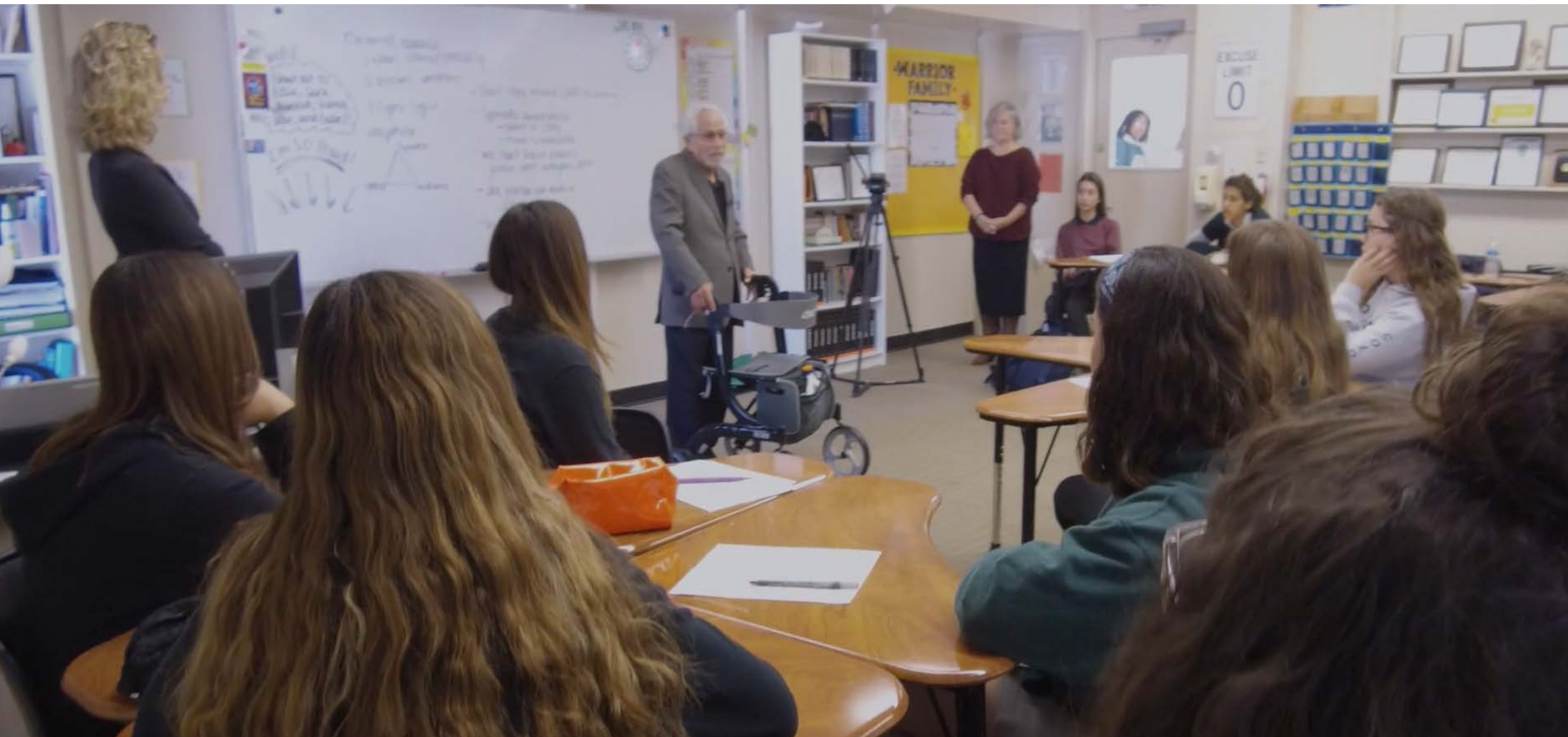
POST-VIEWING DISCUSSION PROMPTS (CONT.)

- How do you understand the psychological and physical experience of being a genocide survivor from watching this film?
- What questions do you still have about the Holocaust after watching this film?
- If you could befriend your “own” survivor, what would you ask him or her?
- After watching this film, how do you think the study of the Holocaust can inform our understanding about current events and contemporary society?



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

These activities are formatted for classroom use, and can be used in middle school, high school, or college classes. They can also be used for breakout groups or subsequent convenings at a screening event or workshop. They can be used as standalone lessons or as an opportunity to focus more closely on one segment of the film after watching it in its entirety. These activities align with Common Core and C3 teaching standards. Please refer to the Sample Standards Alignments section of this Guide for specific standards alignments.



ACTIVITY 1 - Denying Holocaust Denial

1. Instruct students to think of a major event from history and write it in their journals, notebooks, or on notepaper. Examples might be: 9/11, Pearl Harbor, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or the sinking of the Titanic.
2. Tell the class to imagine that someone has approached them and denied that this event ever took place. Give students 10 minutes to make a list of things that could prove that this event really occurred. What arguments or proof would they use to contradict this person's assertion?
3. When they are done journaling, allow time for volunteers to share their work. Use the following questions to guide a short, whole-group discussion:
 - How did you feel when you imagined that someone denied your event happened?
 - What proof did you utilize to show that your event was real?
 - How could that proof be negated by someone who wanted to do so?
 - Why would someone deny an event occurred?
4. While the class is discussing their writing, copy the following quote on the white board, chalkboard, or on chart paper. Alternatively, make copies to distribute to the class.

"As the memory of the Holocaust begins to fade away, it will become easier to deny the genocide even occurred - unless those of us who are truthseekers are able to embrace the memory of the genocide and educate others do the same. What's needed in this propaganda war is for the true stories of Holocaust survivors - as well as those of the Nazi perpetrators, their associates and others who witnessed the genocide - to be told loudly and clearly so that there will never, ever be room for doubt in generations to come. After all, nothing is more powerful, credible or damning than eyewitness accounts."

— James Morcan, *Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories*

ACTIVITY 1 - Denying Holocaust Denial (cont.)

5. Ask the class what they know about the Holocaust. Allow 5-10 minutes to brainstorm definitions and associations.
6. Direct the students' attention to the quote by James Morcan. How does this quote relate to their conversation thus far?
7. Screen the film *My Survivor* for the class. As students watch, ask them to consider the following questions, and take notes accordingly:
 - Why is it important for young people to learn about the Holocaust?
 - Why is it important to Holocaust survivors that future generations know about the Holocaust?
 - What damage is done if people do not learn this history? What damage is done if people deny this history?
 - What do the Holocaust survivors in this film hope to teach young people by sharing their stories?
 - What did you learn by watching this film?
 - How can you be a "truthseeker?"
8. Afterwards, arrange the class in small groups of 4-5 students each. Assign each group one of the questions from the list above. Allow 15 minutes for students to work in groups to answer their question using examples from the notes they took during the viewing of the film.
9. Reconvene as a large group and allow small groups to report back to the class on their discussion.
10. As an optional extension for further learning, students should work in their small groups to research Holocaust denial within the white power movement, and explain how these two issues are related.

ACTIVITY 2 - K/W/L

1. Begin by asking every student to take out a blank piece of notebook paper and fold the paper into thirds, lengthwise.
2. Along each fold, students should draw a line, so there are 3 equal columns down the page. At the top, students should label each column "Know," "Wonder," "Learn."
3. Break students into small groups or pairs and allow 5-10 minutes for discussion. Ask pairs or small groups to talk about what they know about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. Do they know anyone who survived the Holocaust? Have they ever read a Holocaust memoir? Do they know what anti-Semitism is? Have they ever overheard or witnessed examples of anti-Semitism in their own lives? Small groups or pairs should write their findings in their "Know" column.
4. Explain to the class that they'll be watching a personal film about the Holocaust and its place in history - through the eyes of people who survived it. Tell students that they should take notes in their "Learn" column as they watch - listing new information that they learn about the Holocaust, Holocaust denial, and anti-Semitism, and other topics from watching the film.
Screen *My Survivor* for the class.
5. Afterwards, reassemble in pairs or small groups. Ask students to work together to go through their "Know" column. Is there anything written there that they now realize was false? Circle any "false facts" from the "Know" column that were debunked by *My Survivor*. If they can, they should replace their false facts with the correct ones.
6. Next, allow 10 minutes for students to work in small groups to populate their "Wonder" column. What are they still wondering after having watched the film? What do they still want to know? Reconvene as a whole group to debrief.
7. For homework or as an extension, ask students to research one or more of their "Wonder" topics and present their findings to the class, small group, or to their partner.

ACTIVITY 3 - "My" Survivor

1. After watching *My Survivor*, ask the class to discuss why they think this particular internship - that paired a college student with an elderly Holocaust survivor - was so impactful for both the students and for the survivors.
2. Ask the class to identify some of the specific elements that defined this internship, such as: the fact that there were two people - a younger and an elder; the length of the internship (one year); where, and how often the two people met; what sorts of things they did together, what sorts of things they discussed, how/if their families were included, etc.
3. Allow time to list all of the student responses on the board, and then conduct a brief discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - How did each of these elements contribute to the success of the internship?
 - How did each of these elements deepen the experience of the internship for the survivor? For the student?
 - How did each of these elements contribute to the effect that the film had on the audience or the individual viewer? Did they help your comprehension? Did they increase your feelings of compassion for the survivors or students in the film? Did you feel a connection with the people featured in the film?
 - How did each of these elements add to the value of the film itself? Did you feel inspired to get involved and make a difference after watching the film?
4. After this debrief, tell the class to imagine that they are being paired with an elder, similar to the internship they witnessed in *My Survivor*. In pairs, small groups, or individually, students should make a list of questions that they would ask their elder. What would you want to ask someone who belonged to a generation that came two or three before yours? How can you relate to this person's experience? What do you want people to know about this person? Why do you think it is important for people to know this person's story? What else would you want to know, and why?

ACTIVITY 3 - "My" Survivor (cont.)

Note: There are various options for this activity. Students can prepare questions for an elder partner who is a Holocaust survivor, they can prepare for a partner who is an elder from their own community, they can prepare for a partner who is a survivor of another communal or societal event or experience (i.e., the Cambodian genocide, 9/11, the Great Depression, Jim Crow), or, alternatively, they can be given the option to choose one of these options for themselves.

5. Once students have had time to brainstorm preliminary questions, tell them that their assignment is to interview an elder, and present their life story in a documentary, portfolio, or other creative medium. For homework, each student should identify someone they know who would be a suitable partner for this project. Is there a person at their church, synagogue, or mosque whom they can interview? Is there a nursing home in their community, or do they have a grandparent, aunt, or uncle who they can pair up with?
6. Alternatively, students can virtually engage with an elder by using a videotaped testimony from the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive. The Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive includes testimonies from Holocaust survivors, as well as survivors of the Armenian Genocide that coincided with World War I, the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in China, the Cambodian Genocide of 1975-1979, the Guatemalan Genocide of 1978-1983, the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the ongoing conflicts in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, and anti-Rohingya mass violence. The Foundation has made a subset of these testimonies available online, for free, to the public. Interested students should go to <https://vhaonline.usc.edu/login> to access the archive. There, they can choose and view a full-length testimony given by a survivor or witness of the Holocaust or other genocides and mass atrocity crimes.

ACTIVITY 3 - "My" Survivor (cont.)

7. Once students have chosen their "elder," they should start piecing together their own "My Survivor" project. How will they share their elder's life story? Will they use video? Music? Visual art? Creative writing? How will they weave information and historical facts throughout the telling of their personal narrative? What artistic elements might they include (drawings, music, video clips, photographs)? How will they draw in the viewer, so that they are as invested in this person's story as you are?
8. For a shorter-term assignment, students can present their project as a written portfolio, or a hard-copy compilation of written stories. To make this into a longer-term project, students can create multimedia projects such as documentary film, photography, visual art, music, and more. When they are complete, share the students' final projects with the wider school community with a performance or gallery walk-through, and afterwards, donate them to the school or local public library, or museum, to help document community history through personal narrative.

ACTIVITY 4 - Quote Analysis and the Importance of Being an Upstander

1. Start with a short discussion about the following quote from the film:

"The Holocaust happened because the people realized that nobody speaks up, nobody cares. Quietness created the Holocaust.... I wonder now what's gonna happen next. What's gonna happen after we - the survivors - are gone."

- Victor Farkas, *My Survivor*

2. Allow time for students to discuss the meaning of this quote. Ask the class:
 - What does Victor mean when he says "quietness created the Holocaust?"
 - What other examples can you think of, where there was quietness in the face of injustice - from history, from contemporary society, or from your own life?
 - What is the opposite of "quietness" in this context?
 - Why do you think Victor wonders what will happen when all the survivors are gone?
 - What other things has quietness created?
3. Screen the film *My Survivor* for the class.
4. Instruct students to take notes on the film as they watch it, through the thematic lens of "upstanding." Students should note the times in the film where people chose to remain silent in the face of injustice, and places where people chose to speak up or act out. Students should also note the consequences of these choices.
5. After the film concludes, conduct a whole-group discussion using some or all of the following questions as a guide:
 - What does it mean to be a bystander? What does it mean to be an upstander?
 - What is one example from the film that shows people being bystanders? What was the consequence of this action?

ACTIVITY 4 - Quote Analysis and the Importance of Being an Upstander (cont.)

5. (cont.) After the film concludes, conduct a whole-group discussion using some or all of the following questions as a guide:
- What is one example from the film that shows people being upstanders? What was the consequence of this action?
 - How might stereotyping or discriminating progress to violence in a society if left unchecked? What is one example of this from the film?
 - How does the topic of upstanding vs bystanding relate to the scenes of contemporary racism and anti-Semitism depicted in the film, such as the Unite the Right rally, the massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue, or even Dr. Lipstadt's trial?
 - How are the University of Miami students being upstanders, just by participating in the My Survivor program? How are the survivors being upstanders, or resisters, by participating?
 - How is education a form of resistance?
6. For homework, students should write an expository essay about the relationship between silence and the progression of hate in contemporary society. Using specific examples of bystanding, upstanding, and the consequences they create, explore how silence creates a fertile ground for systemic racism, violence, extremism, and anti-Semitism today.

ACTIVITY 5 - Experiential Jigsaw

1. Divide the class into 7 small groups. Assign each group one of the following European cities - each of which was occupied by the Nazis during World War II.
 - Vienna
 - Kovno
 - Lvov
 - Lublin
 - Warsaw
 - Budapest
 - Vinnitsia
2. Screen the film *My Survivor* for the class. Before it begins, explain that each of the cities that were assigned to the small groups were touched upon briefly in the film.
3. Instruct students to listen for their assigned city as they watch the film and note any information they can glean.
4. After the film concludes, have students work in their small groups to research their assigned city, focusing specifically on the city's history during WWII. Topics that should be included might be:
 - What year was this city occupied by the Germans? Was it late in the war, or early? How did this timing affect how the citizens were treated?
 - Did this city resist the Nazis, or was it receptive? Why do you think this is? How did this cultural attitude affect the way the citizens were treated?
 - How many Jews lived in this city before the war? How many immediately after? How many today?
 - What country was this city in prior to WWII? Is it in that same country today?
 - Was this city a cosmopolitan, urban center or a more rural, agricultural town?

ACTIVITY 5 - Experiential Jigsaw (cont.)

4. *(cont.)* After the film concludes, have students work in their small groups to research their assigned city, focusing specifically on the city's history during WWII. Topics that should be included might be:
 - Can you find a story of a Jewish survivor from this city?
 - Can you find a story of a non-Jewish resister from this city?
 - Did this city have a ghetto?
 - What percentage of its Jewish citizens survived the war?
 - How did the war affect non-Jews who lived there - economically, socially, politically?
5. When research is complete, 'jigsaw' the class so that new groups are formed, comprised of one student from each of the original groups. Now, the small groups consist of students who each have researched a different World War II-era European city. Allow time for these new groups to share their research with each other. Encourage students to explore the similarities and differences between the experiences of their cities.
6. After a few rounds of jigsawing, reconvene as a whole class to debrief. What sort of "big picture" of World War II-era Europe was the class able to create by conducting deeper research into each of these locations? How did the experience of German occupation differ between cities? How was it similar? How were the Jews from each city treated differently, or similarly? How do these similarities and differences relate to the attitude and behavior of the citizens and the general outcome of the war for citizens who were Jewish? Why is this important to know and discuss?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use the following questions to start a dialogue about *My Survivor* after they've watched the film. These questions could be used as part of a classroom discussion, a panel Q&A, a family conversation, a community dialogue, or as writing prompts.

THE HOLOCAUST

- What was Kristallnacht?
- How was resistance possible for German Jews during World War II? How was it possible for non-Jewish Germans?
- Why do concentration camp prisoners sometimes have numbers tattooed on their arms? What do the tattooed numbers mean?
- In some of the archival photographs, people are pictured wearing a yellow star-shaped patch on their clothing. Why are they wearing that patch? Why are some people wearing upside-down triangle shaped patches? What do these patches signify?
- The movie reflects on the importance of understanding history so that it doesn't repeat itself. Have any aspects of this history repeated itself in the last 70 years? Explain.
- According to Professor Lipstadt, how does the Holocaust differ from other historical and modern genocides? Why are these differences so important?
- What is important about the high-ranking Nazis' levels of education? How can - and how should - education be a preventative measure for this sort of violence, and these sorts of crimes against humanity? By this measure, how did the Nazis' education fail them?
- What was the purpose of the Nazi medical experiments? How could a medical doctor justify his or her participation in the Nazi medical experiments?
- Why did the Nazis establish ghettos? What is the difference between the Nazi ghettos, work camps, concentration camps, extermination camps, and DP camps?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

THE HOLOCAUST (cont.)

- Who were the Einsatzgruppen?
- What were the Nuremberg Trials?

DEATH MARCHES

- Why did the Nazis evacuate some of the camps when they did? What did they do with the prisoners when they evacuated them? What conditions made these evacuations especially brutal?
- When defeat was imminent, why didn't the Nazis just abandon the camps and leave the prisoners behind? Why did they choose to evacuate the prisoners?
- How do the death marches affect your understanding of the role that everyday German citizens played in the success of the Nazi "Final Solution?" What, if anything, should a German townspeople have done when a death march came through their town or village?

HITLER YOUTH

- Do you play a sport? Are you a Scout? A member of a youth group? What extracurricular programs are you involved with? Now think about the influence these activities have had on your life. How do these experiences relate to the impact that the Hitler Youth might have had on young Germans?
- What do you think are the most powerful techniques for indoctrinating youth? Why are these so powerful? How did the Nazis use Hitler Youth programs to indoctrinate German boys and girls?
- How is social media used for youth/teen indoctrination today? Think about your own social media use. Have you ever seen a post that could be considered indoctrinating? Explain.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

HITLER YOUTH (cont.)

- Did young Germans and their parents have a choice about joining the Hitler Youth programs? What happened if they didn't want to join?
- How were the Hitler Youth depicted in the film?

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- Have you ever met a Holocaust survivor, or heard a Holocaust survivor speak? What impact did this experience have on you?
- In *My Survivor*, Dr. Mindy Hersh says, "It was among the most remarkable experiences that a university student could have, that they would have access to and establish such an intimate relationship with a Holocaust survivor over such an extended period of time." Given the opportunity, why would you choose to - or not to - participate in a program like this one? What would you hope to get out of this experience?
- *My Survivor* shows the impact that personal narrative can have when learning about history. What is your family's historical narrative? How does this narrative reflect your family's values?
- Witnesses to history come in many different forms. What is your family's relationship to World War II? Do you know your family's WWII story?
- Joe Sachs talks about the "injury inside." What do you think he means by this? Do you understand the difference between the physical scars you can see and the emotional ones that you can't see? Do you think it is possible to ever fully heal the "injury inside?"

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

PERSONAL NARRATIVE (cont.)

- In his interview, Vibhu Chittajalu says that before meeting his survivor, he was nervous. “Maybe I’m in over my head. I was so worried about saying something offensive or not asking the right questions.” Do you think similar concerns prevent you, or your peers, from trying to establish relationships with community elders? What knowledge is lost when the connections between one generation and the next are severed?
- Why would a Holocaust survivor want to share their story? Why might they not want to share it?
- Understanding that the survivors will not live forever, what can you do in your school and community to make sure that their stories do? “Who will tell their stories when the last survivor is gone?” What responsibility does your generation have to be a voice and witness to history?
- What surprised you about the survivors featured in *My Survivor*?
- What surprised you about the students featured in *My Survivor*?

HOLOCAUST DENIAL

- What is Holocaust denial? Have you ever seen anything on social media that could be categorized as Holocaust denial? Explain.
- Considering the human witnesses to the Holocaust and the vast records the Nazis left behind, how is Holocaust denial possible?
- What do you think motivates Holocaust deniers to believe their false historical narrative?
- Why is Holocaust denial so damaging?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

HATE, RACISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY

- Were you aware of the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville before watching *My Survivor*?
- What does Dr. Lipstadt mean when she says, “it's not just Charlottesville?”
- What is your reaction to seeing images of large, burning swastikas at a rally in Virginia as recently as 2017?
- What is the relationship between the many different extremist hate groups, such as the KKK, Storm Front, Traditionalist Workers Party, and other white supremacist groups?
- What did you know about the mass murder at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh prior to watching *My Survivor*?
- What conversations should we be having after a tragedy like Pittsburgh, or an event like Charlottesville? How can you help facilitate these conversations at your school, with your family, or with your friends?
- How might recent examples of institutionalized bias, violence, and anti-Semitism indicate that the world has forgotten about the Holocaust? How might learning about the Holocaust help fight against these examples?

MEDIA LITERACY/ PERSONAL RESPONSE

- Because *My Survivor* is about personal histories, it touches on many different aspects of Holocaust history. What do you know about the Holocaust? How does watching *My Survivor* help viewers grasp the enormous scope of the Holocaust?
- Why do you think the filmmakers included current-day footage of survivors visiting the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

MEDIA LITERACY/ PERSONAL RESPONSE (cont.)

- The film talks about man's capacity for evil. What does your religion teach you about this? Is it hard to reconcile what your religion has taught you and what you have learned about the Holocaust?
- What can the Holocaust teach you about the human spirit and will to live? What did you learn about humanity and the human spirit from watching *My Survivor*?
- The famous author, philosopher, human rights advocate, and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel said, "The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference." How do the stories in *My Survivor* teach this lesson?
- Victor Farkas says, "The Holocaust happened because the people realized no one speaks up, no one cares. Quietness created the Holocaust." What does this mean? How important is it for a person to speak up and stand up to injustice?
- Much of this film is about fear, about anxiety, about unknowing, and not belonging. Is there a difference between silence born from indifference and silence born from fear? Explain.
- After watching *My Survivor*, why do you think it is important for students today to learn about the Holocaust? Why is it important for young people to establish relationships with their elders?
- When Fred Mulbauer describes the Hitler Youth during his death march, he says, "their sport was to kill Jews... They had fun. They were laughing. The guy is still alive, [so] they shoot him again." How did these young people become so desensitized to murder, that it could become a game to them?
- How do you feel, and what do you think, when you watch the footage from the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville? What associations come to you when you see protestors carrying burning torches and chanting, "Jews will not replace us" with the Nazi slogan "blood and soil?" Are you surprised? Why or why not?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

MEDIA LITERACY/ PERSONAL RESPONSE (cont.)

- In *My Survivor*, Jasper Lee, one of the university students says, “When we as a society aren’t appropriately outraged by outrageous things, we create more and more space incrementally for those things to happen again, and when we don’t make a change following something terrible, what’s to stop it from happening again?” What does this quote mean to you in terms of each of your individual responsibilities when a hate crime is committed?

Note: This film will likely bring up a lot of questions and reactions, many of which will not get resolved immediately. Encourage viewers to make time in the coming weeks to revisit the conversation and continue to think about the ways that they can work towards the ideals and goals the film brought up - even after the movie ends.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The websites below can offer more information about the Holocaust and the other topics discussed in *My Survivor*.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<https://www.ushmm.org/>

USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education

<https://sfi.usc.edu/>

Yad Vashem

<https://www.yadvashem.org/>

Association of Holocaust Organizations

<https://www.ahoinfo.org/>

Jewish Virtual Library

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/>

Facing History and Ourselves

<http://www.facinghistory.org>

The Wiener Holocaust Library

<https://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/home>

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect

<https://www.annefrank.com/>

Museum of Tolerance

<https://www.museumoftolerance.com/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (cont.)

Simon Wiesenthal Center

<https://www.wiesenthal.com/>

Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach

<https://holocaustmemorialmiamibeach.org/>

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity

<https://eliewieselfoundation.org/>

The National WWII Museum

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/>

Auschwitz - Birkenau Memorial and Museum

<http://auschwitz.org/en/>

SAMPLE STANDARDS ALIGNMENTS

The following are a sample list of standards that illustrate how the educational use of *My Survivor* and the content in this Guide supports standards-based instruction.

CONTENT AREA STANDARDS (MCREL)

WORLD HISTORY | Standard 41

Understands the causes and global consequences of World War

- 41.2** Understands the Holocaust and its impact on Jewish culture and European society
- 41.4** Understands the rise of Nazism and how it was received by society
- 41.8** Understands the climax and moral implications of World War II

CIVICS | Standard 9

Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy

- 9.1** Understands how the institutions of government reflect fundamental values and principles
- 9.2** Understands the interdependence among certain values and principles
Understands the significance of fundamental values and principles for the
- 9.3** individual and society

LANGUAGE ARTS - WRITING | Standard 1

Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

- 1.5** Uses strategies to address writing to different audiences
- 1.6** Uses strategies to adapt writing for different purposes
- 1.7** Writes expository compositions
- 1.8** Writes fictional, biographical, autobiographical, and observational narrative compositions
- 1.9** Writes compositions employing persuasion
- 1.10** Writes descriptive compositions
- 1.11** Writes reflective compositions

SAMPLE STANDARDS ALIGNMENTS

CONTENT AREA STANDARDS (MCREL) (cont.)

VIEWING AND MEDIA | Standard 9

Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

- 9.1** Uses a range of strategies to interpret visual media
- 9.2** Uses a variety of criteria to evaluate informational media
- 9.3** Understands the conventions of visual media genres
- 9.7** Understands how images and sound convey messages in visual media
- 9.8** Understands effects of style and language choice in visual media
- 9.9** Understands how literary forms can be represented in visual narratives

VIEWING AND MEDIA | Standard 4

Gathers and uses information for research purposes

- 4.2** U Uses a variety of print and electronic sources to gather information for research topics
- 4.3** Uses a variety of primary sources to gather information for research topics
- 4.4** Uses a variety of criteria to evaluate the validity, reliability, and usefulness of primary and secondary source information
- 4.5** Synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions that go beyond those found in any of the individual sources

SAMPLE STANDARDS ALIGNMENTS

COMMON CORE AND C3 STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives..

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

SAMPLE STANDARDS ALIGNMENTS

COMMON CORE AND C3 STANDARDS (cont.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.1-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

MEDIA ARTS/ MEDIA LITERACY STANDARDS

MA:Re7.1.IIa

Analyze and synthesize the qualities and relationships of the components in a variety of media artworks, and feedback on how they impact audience.

MA:Re8.1.II

Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks, based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.

MA:Re7.1.IIb

Analyze how a broad range of media artworks manage audience experience, create intention and persuasion through multimodal perception.

MA:Re9.1.8

Evaluate media art works and production processes with developed criteria, considering context and artistic goals

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

The *My Survivor* Film Project, Inc. was established to tell the story of a group of University of Miami alumni who participated in a landmark educational initiative known as the Holocaust Survivors Support Internship Program. Through the intimate intergenerational relationships they formed with survivors of the Holocaust, these compelling young adults came to be strong voices against Holocaust denial and hate, standing as witnesses to history and embracing the survivors' imperative that the memory and lessons of the Holocaust live on. Learn more at www.my-survivor.com.

Senior Executive Director and Producer Dr. Mindy S. Hersh, a licensed mental health counselor, served for six years as the academic director of the internship program. The child of Holocaust survivors, Dr. Hersh was inspired to produce *My Survivor* by her students' passion for the program and the life-changing relationships they forged with members of the remarkable, but rapidly disappearing survivor population.

As an **educator, Executive Director Dr. Helen Sachs Chaset** understood that learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom. For Dr. Chaset, *My Survivor* was a unique opportunity to carry forward the lessons of resilience she learned from her Holocaust survivor parents.

Executive Director Maxine E. Schwartz joined the project following 22 years as Director of Development and Outreach at the University of Miami's Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, home of the internship program, and where she came to believe in the power of learning through intergenerational relationships.

Bonnie Reiter-Lehrer, the Creative Producer of *My Survivor* and the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, used her vast experience in video and documentary fields to bring her singular vision to the project.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS (cont.)

Jerry Levine, the Director and Producer of *My Survivor*, is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, investigative reporter and anchorman. Jerry has been the recipient of more than sixty national film and television awards since 1982, including the coveted Columbia University duPont Award. His award-winning documentaries include *To Never Know Twenty*, *The Smell of Money*, *Israel's Forgotten Heroes*, *Still Waters Run Deep*, *Windows To The Soul*, *Generations In The Sun*, *Inspired*, *Inspired Too*, *Addicted Nation*, and *Echoes of the Holocaust*.



ABOUT BIG PICTURE EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING

Big Picture Ed is a leader in the fields of film education and media literacy, specializing in resource development and educational outreach for film and media projects of all kinds. We leverage film as a powerful educational tool to enlighten audiences, spark engagement, inspire social change, and cultivate new generations of filmgoers and filmmakers. Our leadership shares over 25 years of experience in film, media literacy, curriculum development, community organizing, and education, and we bring this experience to bear for our clients, using their films to teach and edify complex and inspiring issues inside and beyond the classroom in savvy, substantive ways.

Learn more at www.bigpictureeducational.com