Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust
Teacher Guide 2012
At School: Pre- and Post Visit Activities

We encourage teachers to prepare students for their visits to the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust by exploring key events and themes in Holocaust history. This will assist students in better understanding the Museum’s exhibits during their visit.

We also believe it is important to debrief students after their Museum visit. The Holocaust is a complex subject, on both an intellectual and emotional level. It is important for students to have the opportunity to reflect upon their experiences and to have conversations on the concepts covered in the Museum tour when they get back to school.

Here you can find suggestions of pre- and post-visit activities that can be used in the classroom. These activities are designed around our Museum exhibits content and encourage a multi-disciplinary approach to the subject. This guide also includes detailed timelines of the Holocaust and World War II as well as a glossary of Holocaust terms used in our Museum tours.
THE WORLD THAT WAS

The Museum’s first gallery illustrates the life of Jewish communities before the Holocaust. In this room, students explore aspects of Jewish life such as religion, traditions, everyday life and professions. They also learn about the contribution made by Jewish people to the arts and sciences. The touch-screen table with images of pre-war European Jews. These images are organized to highlight the diversity of these communities. They also convey the multi-dimension of Jewish identity. Students are encouraged to think about their own identity in this room.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY:

Students research the life of Jewish communities in Europe before the war.
Students choose a country and research its history before WWII.
• How large was the Jewish population of that country?
• What were the traditions of the Jewish Communities of that country?
• How were they integrated within society?
• What holidays did they celebrate?
• What professions did they practice?
• Are there similarities between their home and community life and your own?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY:

Learning About Your Past: Oral History

1. Students interview a family member from an older generation and ask them about:
   • Their life when they were younger;
   • What activities they were involved in;
   • How life then was different from life nowadays;
   • A defining event in their life;
   • How life was different after that event;

2. Students interview a Holocaust Survivor:
   • Students contact the Museum and set up interviews with a Holocaust Survivor. Students can think back about the Holocaust Survivor Talk they participated in at the Museum, and think of questions they would ask a Survivor.
   • Students can also research Holocaust Survivor Testimonies on the UCS Shoah Foundation website: http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi/.
   • Students then prepare presentations based on their interviews.

Identity Photography project:

3. Students collect photographs of their life. These can be pictures of school life, sports, leisure, vacation, celebration, religion, and family. Students organize them in files and categories, just like the images they have seen in the World That Was exhibit. They write a description of their life based on these images.

4. Students collect objects and photographs that symbolize their life and their family’s history. They organize them as if they were on display in a Museum. Students write labels for each object/image and a description of their exhibition for potential visitors. Students can add a short interview of a family member or a friend who is represented within the display. Students prepare a presentation about the display and discuss how it illustrates their identity and their family history.
HOLOCAUST-ERA NEWSPAPERS
The main hallways of the Museum display front pages of Los Angeles newspapers from the Holocaust era. The headlines indicate just how much information was disseminated in America about the events occurring in Europe. The newspapers are dated from 1933-1945 and range in topic from increasing anti-Semitic violence in Germany to an announcement that half of Europe’s Jews were killed by 1944.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY:
Students read one article from the Newspaper Materials provided in the Actitivy Materials section. Students research the event discussed in the article (Boycott of Jewish Business, Kristallnacht or Liberation).

• What historical information did you learn from this article?
• How did the American press report on the event?
• Did their reporting seem fair or biased?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY:
Genocide, racism and hate crimes continue to occur all over the world. Look in today’s newspaper for an example of such crimes. Compare today’s newspaper article to one from the Holocaust-era.

• Are there any similarities between the Holocaust-era event and the event in today’s newspaper?
• How did the newspaper articles differ? How are they similar?
• Do we have a responsibility to prevent these events from occurring?
• What actions can we take to help prevent these events?
• Research social action organizations that focus on current issues just explored.
PARTISAN SONG

The most famous partisan song was written in Yiddish by Hirsch Glik in 1944 and is entitled Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg (“Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road”). Glik, a poet and partisan imprisoned in the Vilna Ghetto, wrote the song after learning of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. He adapted a well-known march tune composed for the Soviet cinema as the melody. The song was adopted as the official resistance hymn of all Eastern European partisans. Glik is presumed to have died while attempting to escape from a forced labor camp in Estonia.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY:

Listen to the Partisan Song in Yiddish and read the English translation

Analyze the Partisan song as a text
Students write down the feelings that the song evokes.
How would they describe the song?
Afterwards, have students read the English translation of the lyrics (see At School Materials).
Students discuss how their feelings of the song changed after reading the lyrics. Students can paraphrase the song and explain the meaning of words used in it. They share their interpretation with the rest of the class and discuss it. Students can further analyze the lyrics and look into metaphors and symbolism used in the song.

The Partisans
Students research the Jewish partisans, who they were and where and how they operated.
Who were the partisans?
What was their role during the Holocaust?
Who made up the partisans?
Why do you think young people were involved in acts of resistance?
What role did this song play?
What is the message of this song?

Resistance during the Holocaust
Students research acts of resistance during the Holocaust.
How would you define the term Resistance?
Were there different types of resistance? If so, what were they?
What challenges/obstacles did people face when attempting to fight back during the Holocaust?
How would you define this song? Is this an example of resistance? If so, what type?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY:

Students were introduced to many forms of resistance during the Holocaust. Have students discuss which stories inspire them (Miep Gies, Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Sempo Sugihara etc.).

 Students can research acts of resistance in the ghettos and camps. Many of those involved in acts of resistance were young people. Students research the role of young people during the Holocaust (e.g. The White Rose, the Warsaw Ghetto uprising).
Students are encouraged to pick a contemporary song that inspires them.
• What is your song of resistance?
• How does it inspire you?
MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE
Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust has recently opened a brand new building where the Museum’s collection is housed. This new building was designed by a renowned architect: Hagy Belzberg. When planning the Museum’s design, Mr. Belzberg thought about the Museum’s function and content.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY:
Holocaust Museums and their Architecture
Students look at pictures of Holocaust Museums provided in Activity Materials B and research the architecture of the buildings. Have students think about the following questions:
• Was the building designed to house a Museum?
• Did it have another function before becoming a Museum?
• How is the architecture used to teach about the Holocaust?
• How are these three museum buildings similar or different?
• Can you organize Holocaust Museums in groups based on their building (e.g. housed in old concentration camp/ new building)?
• What feelings do these buildings evoke?
• When you visit the Museum, pay specific attention to the architecture. Do you think the building’s design helps teach about the Holocaust? How?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY:
Reflecting on your field trip
Thinking back on their field trip, students can write about:
• What feelings did the Museum building evoke in you?
• What aspects of the architecture did you like/not like?
• What elements of the architecture tell the story of the Holocaust?
• What was your reaction to the Children’s Memorial? How would you describe this space?

Students research museums around the world and prepare a presentation regarding the relationship between museum architecture and content. They discuss their findings with the class.
At School: Newspaper Materials

Los Angeles Examiner
BERLIN, March 27

Adolf Hitler’s Nazi party answered foreign threat of boycotts against German goods today by announcing a movement to boycott Jewish business establishments within the Reich. The purpose of this movement will be to retaliate against foreigners who have made protests based on reports of anti-Semitic outrages in Germany. Government toleration of the movement was seen in a communiqué issued by the Telegraphen-Union which denied that the boycott will have official support, but admitted the administration will “tolerate these measures so long as foreign governments take no steps against atrocity propaganda.”

REICH ALLOWS REPORT
(Because of the interior censorship exercised in Germany it would have been impossible for the Telegraphen-Union to carry the communiqué had the government opposed it.)

In Munich the Hitlerite party press advised the government not to interfere in the boycott against the Jewish business houses in Germany until foreign nations have acted to suppress anti-German boycotts. The papers remarked that the government could use the boycott at home as a bargaining point in halting projected anti-German campaigns abroad.

The party announcement said that steps will be taken to reduce the numbers of Jews in the various professions in order that they might be proportionate to the number of Jews in the country.

HYMN OF HATE

“Thereby,” the statement concluded, “will this Jewish international hymn of hate against Germany, because of a revolution in which no Jewish hair was ruffled, produce the long-awaited declaration concerning the relations between the German people and those who have no conception of the hospitality guaranteed to them.”

Hans Kerro, Nazi Prussian Commissar of Justice, declare in a speech tonight that “the Jew was born from a sing against the Holy Ghost and always has shown himself the servant of decay.”

Joseph Goebbels, Nazi, Minister of Propaganda, announced his department will take “sharp counteractive measures against those responsible for reports of Jewish atrocities. He made this announcement as the result of a conference with Chancellor Hitler.

COMPULSORY LABOR

Dr. Mahkens, newly appointed Labor Commissioner, announced that a system of compulsory labor to remedy unemployment will be introduced shortly. Complete agreement has been reached, he said, with leaders of the old voluntary labor movement, whose experience will be utilized by distributing them in various parts of the country.

The work to be done will include cultivation of waste lands, reforestation and the drainage of swamps. The aim will be to inculcate duty in the fatherland and the conviction that manual work is not necessary evil but a blessing for workers.

CONSULATE OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED REPORTS FALSE

Reports of atrocities assertedly perpetrated against Jews in Germany are denied in two official communications from Berlin received here yesterday by Dr. Gustav of the local German consulate. The telegrams follow:

“Dr. Alfred Apfel, an attorney who was reported tortured to death, has declared on request of the Deutsche Allegemeine Zeitung (a newspaper)...
Los Angeles Examiner
New York, March 27

JEWS HEAR SMITH LIKEN HITLER POLICY TO KU KLUX

NEW YORK, MARCH 27. Alfred E. Smith told thousands of Jews, massed in Madison Square Garden tonight in protest against anti-Semitism of the German Hitler government, that the “only thing to do is to drag it out in the open sunlight and give it the same treatment we gave the Ku Klux Klan.”

Joining representatives of many races and creeds at the indignation meeting called by the American Jewish Congress, Smith said “it makes no difference to me whether it is a brown shirt or a nightshirt.”

The former Governor elbowed his way through the throngs outside the Garden shortly before 10 o’clock and mounted the speaker’s stand to the accompaniment of loud cheering.

The thousands present overflowed the great hall and the streets about it.

The theme of indignation was sounded by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, honorary president of the American Jewish Congress. “This protest is not against the German people whom we love and revere,” the rabbi said. “It is not against the political program for Germany, for Germany is master within its own household, but solely against the present anti-Jewish policy of the Nazi government.” said Mayor O’Brien, William Green, president of the American Federation of labor, the German born United States Senator Robert F. Wagner, Bishop William T. Manning of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Francis McConnell of the Methodist Church, and Dr. John Haynes Holmes of New York’s Community Church.

Throughout the meeting the mention of Hitler’s name brought loud boing.

Soon after 7 o’clock all of the Garden’s approximately 23,000 seats were filled and there were lines of persons standing.

Police Commissioner Edward P. Mulrooney estimate that 35,000 more persons were massed in Forty-ninth street, between Eighth and Ninth avenues, listening to amplifiers. Thousands more gathered at Columbia Circle.
BATISTA OFFERS HAVEN IN CUBA

New York, Nov. 18.—A haven in Cuba was offered political refugees from Germany today by Col. Fulgencio Batista, commander-in-chief of the Cuban—

Monday morning, May 14, 1945
6,200,000 Jewish Deaths Laid to Nazis

Welfare Group Says One ‘Mein Kampf’ Plan Carried Out

Bern, May 13—At least one point in Adolf Hitler’s “mein kampf” program has been carried out thoroughly—the bestial extermination of European Jews.

Of the total of 8,000,000 Jews living in Germany and German-occupied countries before the war, 6,200,000 have died from either execution, cruel treatment or starvation, according to latest figures compiled by Jewish welfare organizations here.

In Germany, where the great majority of European Jews had been concentrated, only 500,000 are alive today—and the word “alive” is a mere figure of speech.

Millions Imprisoned

First came the period of “extermination” proper, from the time of the declaration of war on Russia until the end of 1942. Millions of Jews were taken to camps at Auschwitz, Majdenek, and Treblinka, which boasted the most modern gas execution chambers and crematories. The S.S. hordes invading Russia were simultaneously instructed to shoot all Russian Jews wherever they were encountered.

By the end of 1942, however, Germany felt the need for foreign labor and the remaining able-bodied Jews were sent to work camps. The women, old men and children all disappeared into the gas chambers.

Frail Executed

The slavery of the able-bodied and the execution of the frail continued until the beginning of 1944, by which time the Nazis had reached the saturation point of their cruelty. More than 5,000,000 Jews had been liquidated and the remaining ones were no longer regarded as a “problem,” as Hitler saw it. Rudolph Kastner, a Budapest lawyer who since April, 1944, has devoted his time to rescuing his fellows of Jewish faith from the Nazi grip, told how he “bought” 30,000 Jews from the Nazi S.S. member, Kurt Becher.

Dealt With Gestapo

Becher was sent to Budapest “to detect everything in Hungary which might be useful to German economy.” He bargained Hungarian Jews, then in the hands of the Budapest Gestapo, against money or jewels and promises of more money and jewels.

Thirty thousand Jews were deported in this manner from Hungary and the S.S. promised that they would be allowed to leave for Switzerland. Only 10,000, however, finally arrived here.
GERMAN SLAUGHTER OF 200 JEWS REPORTED
Concentration Camp Prisoners Declared Killed to Avenge Assassinated Envoy

Manchester (Eng) Nov. 18—The Manchester Guardian’s diplomatic correspondent today reported he has learned reliably that 200 German Jews were executed at the Buchenwald concentration camp.

The Guardian, a critic of Chancellor Hitler and frequently banned from newsstands in German, said it has been confirmed that 70 Jews were executed on the night of Wednesday, Nov 9, two days after the shooting in Paris of a minor German diplomat by a 17-year-old Polish Jew.

The 70 executions occurred however, before the death of the diplomat, the newspaper said.

Since Nov. 9, it was asserted additional executions have brought the total number at Buchenwald to about 200.

The Nazi diplomat, Ernst vom Rath, died of his wounds in Paris on Nov. 9.

The executions assertedly were carried out by Nazi firing squads.

The Guardian gave its estimate of the number of Jews arrest throughout Germany, not including Austria and the Sudetenland, as 40,000.

HULL IMPLORES AID FOR JEWS
Calls on All Nations to Relieve Plight of German Refugees

Washington, Nov. 18—Secretary Hull urged the active participation of all governments in seeking a solution for the problem of German Jewish refugees today, asserting that recent developments had made the problem more than ever urgent.

He made this assertion in a formal statement, announcing that Myron Taylor will return to London to attend, as the representative of the Washington government, an early meeting of the intergovernmental committee on political refugees.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

The day was filled with other developments arising from Nazi treatment of the Jews, which President Roosevelt has denounced “unbelievable.”

The President asked the Labor Department to permit 12,000 to 15,000 German and Austria refugees, here on six-month visitors’ visas, to remain in the country an additional half-year. He told a press conference it would be inhuman to send them back to face the rigors of a concentration camp or other persecutions.

ADDS VOICE

Attorney General Cummings joined the still growing list of prominent individuals who have denounced Germany’s treatment of the Jews, asserting it had “shocked the conscience of the world” and is “as uncivilized as the cruelties of 19 centuries ago when Christians were fed to wild beasts.”
**THE PARTISAN SONG LYRICS**

*Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg*

Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road  
Lyrics: Hirsch Glik  
Translation: Irving Greenberg  

Never say you are going on your last road,  
[Not even] when leaden skies block out days of blue.  
The hour we long for will yet come,  
The tread of our footsteps will pound out—We are here!  
From lands green with palms to lands white with snow,  
We come, bearing our pain and our woe,  
And wherever a spurt of our blood fell,  
There will blossom our courage and our strength!  
The rising morning sun will yet light up our today,  
And yesterday—with our foe—will fade away.  
But if the sun be delayed and the dawn held back,  
Let this song go forth as a password from generation to generation!  
This song was written with blood, not with lead,  
It is not the melody of a bird soaring free,  
A people, standing between collapsing walls,  
Holding gun in hand, sang this song!  
Never say you are going on your last road,  
[Not even] when leaden skies block out days of blue.  
The hour we long for will yet come,  
The tread of our footsteps will pound out—We are here!
HOLOCAUST MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE

Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site

In 1960, a temporary museum was opened in the former crematorium at Dachau. On May 9, 1965 the Dachau Memorial Site was dedicated and in 1968, the International Memorial was erected on the square where prisoners had been forced to gather for roll call. The bronze sculpture by Holocaust survivor Nandor Gild depicts emancipated human bodies caught in barbed wire. Two of the original barracks have been rebuilt and the other 32 barracks are indicated by concrete foundations. The Memorial Site also includes four chapels for the various religions represented by the prisoners.
At School: Holocaust Museum Architecture

Anne Frank Museum, Amsterdam

Jewish Museum Berlin

The Jewish Museum Berlin consists of two buildings: the Kollegienhaus, a former courthouse built in the 18th century and the wing designed by architect Daniel Libeskind. The original Jewish Museum in Berlin was founded in 1933 but the Nazi regime closed it in 1938. It was not until 1975 that talks to establish a new Jewish Museum began. The Museum opened in September 2001.
At School: Holocaust Timeline

Resources

HOLOCAUST TIMELINE

January 1933
Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler, rises to power. On January 30, 1933, the Nazis succeed in parliamentary elections, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor.

March 1933
Nazis establish Dachau, the first major concentration camp for political opponents. After the November Pogrom (Kristallnacht) in 1938, 10,000 Jewish men are incarcerated in this camp as a “protective custody.”

1933-1939
Nazis enact over 400 anti-Jewish laws.

September 1935
Nuremberg Laws or Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor are passed on September 15, 1935. Restrictive anti-Jewish legislation defines who is a Jew. These laws denied citizenship to Jews and forbade intermarriage with non-Jews. The Laws were expanded to Nazi-occupied countries and territories.

March 1938
Anschluss of Austria (in German union). Anti-Jewish laws are immediately implemented for the Austrian Jewish population.

September-October 1938
Munich Agreement and annexation of Sudetenland, resulting in the partition of Czechoslovakia.

November 9 – 10, 1938
Kristallnacht or November Pogrom. Nazis ravage the Jewish communities in Germany, Austria, the Sudetenland, and Danzig (Gdansk) as a revenge for the assassination of Ernst vom Rath, third secretary of the German embassy in Paris by a Jewish young man, Herschel Grynszpan. Hundreds of synagogues and Jewish businesses are vandalized or destroyed.

March 15, 1939
Nazi regime dismembers the Czechoslovakian state. On March 15, 1939, German troops march in Prague. Slovakia is established as a German-satellite state. The Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia is created out of two Czech provinces. The Jewish population is subjugated to all anti-Jewish laws and eventual deportation to the East or to Theresienstadt Ghetto.

September 1, 1939
German invasion of Poland. The Second World War begins. On September 3, Great Britain and France declare war on Germany. The Polish Government goes into exile in London. Polish resistance to German occupation begins. The Polish underground army, the Home Army (Armia Krajowa) unites the multiple resistance units in February 1942; it is 400,000 men strong and receives orders from the Polish Government in London.
August 23, 1939
Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact between Nazi Germany and the USSR is signed by Soviet foreign
minister Viacheslav Molotov and German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. The secret protocol to this
treaty provisioned the division of Poland between Germany and USSR and the annexation of East European
countries and territories in favor of the USSR. In return, the USSR withdrew from the anti-German negotiations
with Great Britain and France. After the German Army invaded Poland, the Soviet Army entered the Polish
provinces from the East. Despite the Soviet betrayal, the Polish Army courageously fought for one month. The
Jewish population of Poland demonstrated valor defending the common homeland.

1939 - 1940
Nazi authorities divide Poland, annexing its western part to the Greater Germany and establishing on the rest of
Polish territory the General Government with the capital in Krakow. Anti-Jewish measures including ghettoization
are implemented. Five major Jewish ghettos in Poland are created, namely Warsaw, Łódź, Kraków, Lwów, and
Lublin. Many other ghettos are formed in other cities. The Jews are confined to the ghettos and destined to
starvation, disease, and eventual deportation to death and labor camps.

April - May 1940
German armies invade Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. Anti-Jewish measures and
actions vary from country to country. Eventually, from 1942 on, the deportations of Jews from western Europe to
the death camps in Poland begins.

June 22, 1941
Invasion of the Soviet Union, “Operation Barbarossa,” begins. The Soviet Army, depleted by the Stalin’s purges
and taken by surprise, rapidly retreats. Suffering great casualties, millions of Soviet soldiers are taken prisoners
of war by the German Army. Einsatzgruppen (special action units) composed of German police and security
forces follow the advance of the army. They carry out mass killing of the Jewish population on the occupied
Soviet territories (Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bessarabia, and western part of the Russian
Federation). Instead of ghettoization, the German killing squads and the army perpetrated mass killing of the
Jewish population in the wake of invasion.

September 29-30, 1941
Babi Yar Massacre. On these dates, at the outskirts of Kiev, the German police battalions (part of the Einsatzgruppen
C) and Ukrainian auxiliary police killed 33,800 Jewish men, women, and children. It was an extraordinary
massacre even on a Nazi scale. The mass murder at Babi Yar came as the Nazi retaliation to the Soviet NKVD’s
(security police) subversive activities in the first days of German presence in Kiev. The Germans claimed that the
Jews were part of this conspiracy.

January 20, 1942
The Wannsee Conference, the meeting of the highest SS, Security, and Economic authorities of Nazi Germany to
discuss “The Final Solution to the Jewish Question” in Europe, a euphemistic term for the total extermination of
the European Jewry. A plan was developed to establish and convert several concentration camps into the institutions
of mass murder and slave labor spurring the systematic, industrialized annihilation of the Jewish population in the
German occupied and controlled territories.

June 1942
Operation (Aktion) Reinhard, named after Reinhard Heydrich, SS General and chief of the Security Police and
SD, after he was assassinated by a Czech patriot in Prague on May 27, 1942. The Operation entails the so-called
“resettlement” of the Jews in the General Gouvernement, specifically in the Lublin area with the clandestine clandestine construction of death camps, namely Sobibór, Chelmno, and Treblinka. SS and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik is placed in charge of Operation Reinhard. Operation Reinhard claims the lives of 1.5 million Jews and non-Jews from eastern and western Europe.

1942
Six death camps, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Chelmno, and Majdanek, are in full operation.

1942 - 1944
The death tolls for the camps are as follows: Treblinka, (750,000 Jews); Belzec, (550,000 Jews); Sobibór, (200,000 Jews); Chelmno, (150,000 Jews) and Majdanek (also called Lublin, 50,000 Jews). Auschwitz continued to operate through the summer of 1944; its final death toll was about 1.2 million Jews and up to 300,000 non-Jews.

July 1942
Mass deportation from Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka and other death camps begins. From July-September 1942 and to the Spring of 1943, over 300,000 were deported to death from Warsaw ghetto.

April 1943
Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The Uprising begins on April 19, 1943 when 90% of the ghetto population had been annihilated and 56,000 Jews still remained in the ghetto. The Jewish underground of 800 -1000 young men and women rose against superior Nazi forces. The latter were soon reinforced by the special SS forces and the auxiliary Ukrainian and Lithuanian troops. The Uprising lasted until May 16, 1943, demonstrating to the whole world unparalleled courage, self-sacrifice and heroism. After the revolt, the Ghetto was completely destroyed, 5,000 – 6,000 Jews were killed during the Nazi assault and the survivors were deported to concentration and death camps.

1940 - 1944
Auschwitz-Birkenau or Auschwitz II operating fully. The camp operated from June 1940 to January 1945. The first inmates were Jews, Soviet POWs, and Polish political prisoners. Most of the 1.6 million people murdered at the Auschwitz camps were gassed at Birkenau. The Jewish death toll amounted at 1.2 million. In May 1944, hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

April - May 1944
After German military marched into Hungary, the Hungarian authorities, guided by the Nazis, concentrated around 450,000 Jews from Hungary proper and the Hungarian-annexed territories of Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia in the ghettos and transit centers. Soon after, they were deported mainly to Auschwitz-Birkenau, to other concentration camps, and to the Austrian border to build fortification lines.

January 27, 1945
Red Army liberates the Auschwitz camps. Approximately 7,600 inmates remain in the camps at liberation.

Spring, 1945
The Allied forces liberate Nazi concentration camps in Germany and Austria. Horrendous evidences of the Nazi atrocities are revealed to the world.

May 7, 1945
German Armed Forces High Command signs unconditional surrender. Nazi Germany lost the war against the Allied Nations but persisted in the completion of the war against European Jewry.
WORLD WAR II TIMELINE

1939
After securing the neutrality of the Soviet Union (through the August 1939 German-Soviet Pact of nonaggression), Germany started World War II by invading Poland on September 1, 1939. Britain and France responded by declaring war on Germany on September 3. Within a month, Poland was defeated by a combination of German and Soviet forces and was partitioned between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

1940
The relative lull in fighting which followed the defeat of Poland ended on April 9, 1940, when German forces invaded Norway and Denmark. On May 10, 1940, Germany began its assault on western Europe by invading the Low Countries (Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg), which had taken neutral positions in the war, as well as France. On June 22, 1940, France signed an armistice with Germany, which provided for the German occupation of the northern half of the country and permitted the establishment of a collaborationist regime in the south with its seat in the city of Vichy. With German encouragement, the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic states in June 1940 and formally annexed them in August 1940. Italy, a member of the Axis (countries allied with Germany), joined the war on June 10, 1940. From July 10 to October 31, 1940, the Nazis waged, and ultimately lost, an air war over England, known as the Battle of Britain.

1941
After securing the Balkan region by invading Yugoslavia and Greece on April 6, 1941, the Germans and their allies invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, in direct violation of the German-Soviet Pact. In June and July 1941, the Germans also occupied the Baltic states. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin then became a major wartime Allied leader, in opposition to Nazi Germany and its Axis allies. During the summer and autumn of 1941, German troops advanced deep into the Soviet Union, but stiffening Red Army resistance and a brutal winter prevented the Germans from capturing the key cities of Leningrad and Moscow. On December 6, 1941, Soviet troops launched a significant counteroffensive that drove German forces permanently from the outskirts of Moscow. One day later, on December 7, 1941, Japan (one of the Axis powers) bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The United States immediately declared war on Japan. On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States as the military conflict widened.

1942-1943
In May 1942, the British Royal Air Force carried out a raid on the German city of Cologne with a thousand bombers, for the first time bringing war home to Germany. For the next three years, Allied air forces systematically bombed industrial plants and cities all over the Reich, reducing much of urban Germany to rubble by 1945. In late 1942 and early 1943, the Allied forces achieved a series of significant military triumphs in North Africa. The failure of French armed forces to prevent Allied occupation of Morocco and Algeria triggered a German occupation of collaborationist Vichy France on November 11, 1942. Axis military units in Africa, approximately 150,000 troops in all, surrendered in May 1943.

On the eastern front, during the summer of 1942, the Germans and their Axis allies renewed their offensive in the Soviet Union, aiming to capture Stalingrad on the Volga River, as well as the city of Baku and the Caucasian oil fields. The German offensive stalled on both fronts in the late summer of 1942. In November, Soviet troops launched a counteroffensive at Stalingrad and on February 2, 1943, the German Sixth Army surrendered to the Soviets. The Germans mounted one more offensive at Kursk in July 1943, the biggest tank battle in history, but Soviet troops blunted the attack and assumed a military predominance that they would not again relinquish during the course of the war.
In July 1943, the Allies landed in Sicily and in September went ashore on the Italian mainland. After the Italian Fascist Party’s Grand Council deposed Italian premier Benito Mussolini (an ally of Hitler), the Italian military took over and negotiated a surrender to Anglo-American forces on September 8. German troops stationed in Italy seized control of the northern half of the peninsula, and continued to resist. Mussolini, who had been arrested by Italian military authorities, was rescued by German SS commandos in September and established (under German supervision) a neo-Fascist puppet regime in northern Italy. German troops continued to hold northern Italy until surrendering on May 2, 1945.

1944
On June 6, 1944 (D-Day), as part of a massive military operation, over 150,000 Allied soldiers landed in France, which was liberated by the end of August. On September 11, 1944, the first U.S. troops crossed into Germany, one month after Soviet troops crossed the eastern border. In mid-December the Germans launched a counterattack in Belgium and northern France, known as the Battle of the Bulge. Allied air forces attacked Nazi industrial plants.

1945
The Soviets began an offensive on January 12, 1945, liberating western Poland and forcing Hungary (an Axis ally) to surrender. In mid-February 1945, the Allies bombed the German city of Dresden, killing approximately 35,000 civilians. American troops crossed the Rhine River on March 7, 1945. A final Soviet offensive on April 16, 1945, enabled Soviet forces to encircle the German capital, Berlin. As Soviet troops fought their way towards the Reich Chancellery, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Western Allies at Reims and on May 9 to the Soviets in Berlin. In August, the war in the Pacific ended soon after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing 120,000 civilians. Japan formally surrendered on September 2.

World War II resulted in an estimated 55 million deaths worldwide. It was the largest and most destructive conflict in history.

Source: http://www.ushmm.org
GLOSSARY

**Anti-Semitism**: hostility toward or hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group, often accompanied by social, economic, or political discrimination.

**Aryan**: Term used in Nazi Germany to refer to non-Jewish and non-Gypsy Caucasians. Northern Europeans with especially “Nordic” features such as blonde hair and blue eyes were considered by so-called race scientists to be the most superior of Aryans, members of a “master race.”

**Auschwitz**: the largest Nazi concentration camp complex, located 37 miles west of Krakow, Poland. The Auschwitz main camp (Auschwitz I) was established in 1940. In 1942, a killing center was established at Auschwitz-Birkenau (Auschwitz II). In 1941, Auschwitz-Monowitz (Auschwitz III) was established as a forced-labor camp. More than 100 subcamps and labor detachments were administratively connected to Auschwitz III.

**Babi Yar**: On September 29-30, 1941, the Jewish population of Kiev was murdered at Babi Yar, a ravine northwest of the city. 33,771 Jews were massacred in two days. It is estimated that some 100,000 people, including Jews, Roma-Sinti, Communists and Soviet Union prisoners of war, were murdered at Babi Yar.

**Birkenau**: Nazi camp also known as Auschwitz II (see Auschwitz above), Birkenau contained systematic mass killing operations. It also housed thousands of concentration camp prisoners deployed at forced labor.

**Boycott**: The refusal to use or support a business or organization; refusal is generally based on political or ideological differences.

**Brihah**: The post-war movement of illegal emigration to Palestine. It is estimated that 150,000 Jews reached Palestine with help from the Brihah organization.

**Buchenwald**: a large concentration camp established in 1937 by the Nazis. It was located in north-central Germany, near the city of Weimar.

**Civil Rights**: Personal and property rights guaranteed by the Constitution and by law.

**Concentration Camp**: Throughout German-occupied Europe, the Nazis established camps to detain and, if necessary, kill so-called enemies of the state, including Jews, Gypsies, political and religious opponents, members of national resistance movements, homosexuals, and others. Imprisonment in a concentration camp was of unlimited duration, was not linked to a specific act, and was not subject to any judicial review. In addition to concentration camps, the Nazi regime ran several other kinds of camps including labor camps, transit camps, prisoner-of-war camps, and killing centers.

**Crematorium**: a facility containing a furnace for reducing dead bodies to ashes by burning.

**Death March**: Forced marches of concentration camp prisoners toward Germany. These marches occurred when camps were evacuated at the end of the war because of advancing Soviet and Allied troops. Many prisoners died or were killed during these marches.

**Deportation**: Forced transfer of Jews to ghettos, concentration camps or killing centers. Jews were generally placed in cattle cars without food, water, windows or toilets.
**Discrimination**: Action based on prejudice or racist beliefs that results in unfair treatment of individuals or groups; unjust conditions in areas such as employment, housing and education.

**Displaced Persons Camps**: Camps set up after World War II for survivors of the Holocaust who had no place to go. Thousands of Jews lived in these camps for up to 5 years.

**Einsatzgruppen** (mobile killing units): mobile units of the German Security Police and Sicherheitsdienst (SD) augmented by Ordnungspolizei (Order Police) and Waffen-SS personnel. These units followed the German army as it invaded the nations of central and eastern Europe. Their duties included the arrest or murder of political opponents and potential resistance. In Poland in 1939, these units were assigned to shoot Polish intellectuals and to concentrate the Jewish population into large cities. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, Einsatzgruppen personnel killed Jews, Soviet political commissars, Gypsies (Roma), mentally disabled persons, and other perceived “racial” and ideological enemies, usually by mass shootings.

**Evian Conference**: In the summer of 1938, delegates from 32 countries met in Evian, France to discuss the refugee problem, particularly for German Jews. Most countries offered excuses for why they did not let in more refugees and no quotas were substantially changed.

**Euthanasia**: Euthanasia (literally, “good death”) usually refers to the inducement of a painless death for a chronically or terminally ill individual. In Nazi usage, however, “euthanasia” was a euphemistic term for a clandestine program which targeted for systematic killing institutionalized mentally and physically disabled patients, without the consent of themselves or their families.

“**Final Solution”**: the Nazi plan to annihilate the European Jews.

**Gas Chambers**: Gas chambers were built in the death camps, and used the deadly Zyklon B gas. These specially constructed rooms were designed to kill as many Jews as quickly as possible.

**German-Soviet Pact**: An economic agreement and non-aggressive pact, known also as the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. Signed on August 23, 1939, the pact was destroyed on December 18, 1940 when Hitler signed Directive 21, the order to invade the Soviet Union.

**Gestapo**: abbreviation for Geheime Staatspolizei, the German Secret State Police, which was under SS control. It was responsible for investigating political crimes and opposition activities.

**Ghetto**: a confined area of a city in which members of a minority group are compelled to live. The first use of the term “ghetto” for a section of a city in which Jews lived was in Venice, Italy, in 1516.

**Heydrich, Reinhard**: (1904-1942) SS General and chief of the Security Police and SD. Sometime in December 1940, Heydrich was tasked with developing a “Final Solution” of the Jewish question in Europe.

**Himmler, Heinrich**: (1900-1945) Reichsführer-SS (Reich Leader of the SS) and Chief of German Police, a position which included supreme command over the Gestapo, the concentration camps, and the Waffen-SS. After 1943, Himmler was Minister of the Interior of Nazi Germany, principal planner for the aim of Nazi Germany to kill all European Jews.

**Hitler, Adolf**: (1889-1945) Führer (leader) of the National Socialist (Nazi) movement (1921-1945); Reich
Chancellor of Germany 1933-1945; Führer of the German Nation (1934-1945).

**Holocaust**: The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims. Six million were murdered.

**Human Rights**: The “rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled.” In the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations created the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that introduced the notion in the public realm that rights are universal, inalienable, and inherent to the well-being of an individual.

**Judenrat**: The German-established Jewish Council in the ghettos. The Jewish administrators were required to ensure that Nazi orders were implemented.

**Kashrut**: Literally meaning “fit”, the term applies to anything that is suitable to eat according to Jews dietary laws. According to these laws, certain kinds of meat may be not eaten, animals must be slaughtered in a specified manner and milk and meat may not be eaten together.

**Kapo**: a concentration camp prisoner selected to oversee other prisoners on labor details. The term is often used generically for any concentration camp prisoner to whom the SS gave authority over other prisoners.

**Killing centers**: The Nazis established killing centers for efficient mass murder. Unlike concentration camps, which served primarily as detention and labor centers, killing centers (also referred to as “extermination camps” or “death camps”) were almost exclusively “death factories.” German SS and police murdered nearly 2,700,000 Jews in the killing centers either by asphyxiation with poison gas or by shooting.

**Kindertransport**: The informal name given to a series of rescue efforts to bring Jewish children to Great Britain between 1938 and 1940.

**Kommando**: German word for detachment, such as a detachment of concentration camp prisoners at forced labor.

**Kristallnacht**: usually referred to as the “Night of Broken Glass.” It is the name given to the violent anti-Jewish pogrom of November 9 and 10, 1938. Instigated primarily by Nazi party officials and the SA (Nazi Storm Troopers), the pogrom occurred throughout Germany, annexed Austria, and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia.

**Mengele, Dr. Josef**: (1911-1979) SS physician assigned to Auschwitz; notorious for conducting so-called medical experiments on inmates, especially twins and dwarfs. Known as the “Angel of Death,” for his coldly cruel demeanor on the ramp, Mengele is remembered for his coldly cruel demeanor while selecting prisoners for experimentation.

**Partisan**: A member of an organized group fighting against the Nazis. Some Jews formed their own partisan groups and others joined local resistance efforts.

**Pogrom**: A violent attack against a particular group of people. The word derives from a Russian word for “havoc.” Pogroms against Jews were often supported by the local government.

**Prejudice**: A preconceived attitude, opinion or feeling, usually negative, formed without adequate knowledge,
thought or reason.

**Propaganda**: The deliberate spreading of ideas or information, true or untrue, with the purpose of manipulating public opinion to gain support for one’s cause or to discourage support for another.

**Racism**: A set of beliefs based on perceived ‘racial’ superiority and inferiority. A system of domination that is played out in everyday interactions, and the unequal distribution of privilege, resources and power.

**Red Army**: the army of the Soviet Union.

**“Resettlement”**: a Nazi euphemism for deportation and murder.

**Roma-Sinti**: a nomadic people whose ancestors migrated to Europe from India. Roma is the correct term for Gypsy, which is sometimes perceived as pejorative. Nazi Germany and its Axis partners persecuted and killed large numbers of Roma during the era of the Holocaust.

**SS**: German abbreviation for Schutzstaffel (literally, protection squads). A paramilitary formation of the Nazi party initially created to serve as bodyguards to Hitler and other Nazi leaders. It later took charge of political intelligence gathering, the German police and the central security apparatus, the concentration camps, and the systematic mass murder of Jews and other victims.

**S.S. St. Louis**: On May 13, 1939, the S.S. St. Louis sailed from Germany to Cuba with 900 Jewish refugees. The passengers were not allowed to disembark in Cuba, and America’s restrictive quotas also did not allow them to enter. The ship returned to Europe and many of its passengers were murdered during the Holocaust.

**Sachsenhausen**: the principal Nazi concentration camp for the Berlin area.

**Scapegoat**: An individual or group unfairly blamed for problems not of their making.

**Shabbat**: The Jewish Sabbath, which starts of Friday evening and ends on Saturday night. It is the day of spiritual rest and reflection.

**Sonderkommando** (Special Detachments): in killing centers, Sonderkommandos consisted of those prisoners selected to remain alive as forced laborers to facilitate the killing process, particularly the disposal of corpses.

**Stereotype**: A simplistic, firmly held belief, often negative, about individual characteristics generalized to all people within that group.

**Synagogue**: in Judaism, a house of worship and learning.

**Tolerance**: A fair and objective attitude toward those whose opinions and practices differ from one’s own. The commitment to respect human dignity.

**Torah**: The first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). A Torah scroll is handwritten and read out loud in synagogue three times a week.

**Weimar Republic**: Name for the parliamentary democracy established in Germany from 1919-1933,
following the collapse of Imperial Germany and preceding Nazi rule.

**Yellow star**: A badge featuring the Star of David (a symbol of Judaism) used by the Nazi regime during the Holocaust as a method of visibly identifying Jews.

**Zionism**: A movement to establish a Jews State in the land of Israel. Modern Zionism began in the late 19th century, and included several fractions with different ideologies.
RESOURCES

Anne Frank House
http://www.annefrank.org/

Anti-Defamation League
www.adl.org

Auschwitz Museum
http://www.auschwitz.org.pl/

Bergen-Belsen Memorial
http://www.bergenbelsen.de/en/

Facing History and Ourselves
www.facinghistory.org

The Ghetto Fighters’ House
http://gfh.org.il/Eng/

Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center (Chicago, Illinois)
http://www.ilholocaustmuseum.org/

Imperial War Museum’s Holocaust Exhibition (London, UK)
ttp://london.iwm.org.uk

Jewish Partisans Educational Foundation
www.jewishpartisans.org

Museum of Jewish Heritage: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust (New York City)
http://www.mjhnyc.org/index.htm

Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Museum of Tolerance (Los Angeles, California)
http://motlc.wiesenthal.com

Theresienstadt
http://www.bterezin.org.il/en_general_info.htm

U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, D.C.)
http://www.ushmm.org/

USC-Shoah Foundation
http://college.usc.edu/vhi/

Yad Vashem
http://www.yadvashem.org