

STUDY GUIDE

LIFE IN SHADOWS HIDDEN CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

AN EXHIBITION OF THE
UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.

This study guide is designed to help students, teachers, and families prepare for and discuss *Life in Shadows: Hidden Children and the Holocaust*. It contains background information, vocabulary, and resources, as well as discussion questions and activities for before, during, and after a visit. Activities are designed for both grades 6–8 and grades 8–10. Please make copies of the guide as needed.

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

LIFE IN SHADOWS

HIDDEN CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

A YOUNG GIRL HID FOR 14 MONTHS IN A SEWER TO escape death at the hands of the Germans and those who collaborated with them. She managed to survive.

A teenage boy and his family fled into the forests around their town to elude the **Nazi*** hunters, living for three years by moving from hideout to hideout. He was eventually caught only weeks before the end of the war and executed.

Why were these individuals forced to take such measures and forced to hide for their lives? What had they done?

Nothing—except to be identified as Jewish.

Under Adolf Hitler, Nazi Germany aimed to “cleanse” Europe of all **Jews**, using whatever brutal means necessary. The effort very nearly succeeded. When Germany was finally forced to surrender at the close of World War II in 1945, six million Jews had been murdered by the Nazis and their supporters—nearly two-thirds of the prewar Jewish population of Europe.

When I look at the barbed wire that separates us from the rest of the world, my soul longs for freedom—like a bird in a cage. My eyes are filled with tears. I envy those birds that can fly freely. When I write these words my heart breaks and I see images from the past. Will I ever live in better times? Who knows? It's a difficult question. May God help us. Will I be with my parents and friends after the war? Will we have enough bread and rye flour? Right now the starvation is at its peak. Once again we have nothing to cook.... Everybody wants to live.

—ANONYMOUS GIRL IN DIARY ENTRY OF MARCH 6, 1942, WRITTEN IN THE ŁÓDŹ GHETTO IN POLAND. THE AUTHOR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN A TEENAGE GIRL.

Jewish children were especially vulnerable. Adults sometimes had a slim chance of being selected for forced labor in German factories; children, particularly those under 12, were often of little use as workers however. Most young people rounded up by the Germans and their collaborators and sent to the **killing centers** were murdered almost immediately upon arrival. At Auschwitz, for example, of an estimated 216,000 young people deported to the camp, only 6,700 teens were selected for forced labor.

With ingenuity, luck, and often some help from others, a small fraction of the hunted managed to hide from the Germans and those who collaborated with them. Some children like German-Jewish teenager Anne Frank—whose family moved to Holland in the 1930s to escape Nazi persecution and whose diary has made her one of the best-known witnesses to Nazi oppression—found hiding places, but were eventually discovered, deported, and killed. Others, however, remained undiscovered. Most Jewish children who survived the **Holocaust** did so in hiding.

What happened to the young girl and the teenage boy mentioned above is true. In 1943, when the Jewish **ghetto** of Lvov, Poland, was being liquidated, eight-year-old Krystyna Chiger and her family hid in the city sewers to escape arrest, deportation, and death. The teenage boy, Otto Wolf, and his family, when ordered to report for deportation in the summer of 1942, fled into the forests outside their Czech hometown of Mohelnice. For almost three years, the Wolfs moved from hideout to hideout, eluding their Nazi hunters. Otto was only 17 years old when he was captured and murdered. The exhibition *Life in Shadows* tells their stories as well as the stories of other hidden children through their own words and the objects they made or used while in hiding.

Like the exhibition, this guide features excerpts from diaries and memoirs. In these firsthand accounts, hidden children describe their experiences and how they coped with dilemmas and danger. In disguise or in hiding, these young people learned to deny their real identities and to hide their feelings. In many cases, their ordeal changed their lives in ways they still struggle with today.

*SEE VOCABULARY LIST FOR DEFINITIONS OF WORDS IN BOLDFACE TYPE.

HIDDEN CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

The Nazi persecution of Jews in Germany began in 1933, when Adolf Hitler, leader of the Nazis, was appointed Chancellor. Over the following months and years, the Nazi regime radically altered German society by enacting and enforcing **racist** and **antisemitic** legislation, which was sometimes preceded or accompanied by violent assaults against Jews. By 1939, Germany's Jews had lost their rights, jobs, and property, and were subject to physical attacks and mistreatment. Playing on existing prejudices, the Nazi government encouraged Germans to treat Jews as outcasts.

After German tanks rolled into Poland at the start of World War II in September 1939 and then across Europe, German authorities put into place antisemitic decrees and regulations in the newly occupied countries. Jews were first identified and subsequently required to wear special badges or armbands marked with the **Star of David**; their civil rights were taken away. Jewish businesses and property were confiscated and sometimes transferred to non-Jews. Limits were placed on where Jews could go and even when they were allowed to appear on the street. Jewish youngsters were not allowed to attend school with their former classmates. Very quickly, Jews were forced out of public life. With so many restrictions, friendships with non-Jews became difficult or impossible to maintain.

RACIAL ANTISEMITISM, NOT RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

Jews have been persecuted for their religious beliefs at various times throughout history. The Nazis, however, were concerned with race, not religion. In the Nazi racist view, true "Aryans" stood superior above all other so-called races. Below came "inferior people," including blacks, Poles, Gypsies, and Jews, as well as people with physical or mental disabilities. All of these groups faced persecution under the Nazis.

The Nazis physically removed Jews and isolated them from the rest of society. In western Europe, the Germans and their collaborators rounded up many Jews and forced them into internment camps. In eastern Europe, the Nazis generally forced Jews into ghettos, small sections of towns and cities that were blocked off from the rest of the population. With the Jews trapped in these areas, away from prying eyes, the German authorities were free to act with increasing brutality. Starvation and disease became additional weapons that killed thousands.

Killing squads followed the German army into the Soviet Union in June 1941, murdering Soviet Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and institutionalized persons with disabilities as well as officials of the Communist Party and the Soviet government. That December, the first killing center began operation at Chełmno in German-occupied Poland. In January 1942, at the Wansee Conference, Nazi leaders formalized the decision to carry out the mass murder of the Jews. During 1942, the Nazis established five more killing centers to carry out the murder of Europe's Jews. By the time the war ended in 1945, 6 million Jews were dead. Of these, more than 1 million, and perhaps as many as 1.5 million, were children.

CHOICES: TO HIDE OR NOT TO HIDE?

The vast majority of Jews in German-occupied Europe never went into hiding, for many reasons. Hiding meant leaving behind relatives, risking immediate and severe punishment, and finding an individual or family willing to provide refuge. Many Jews held out the hope that the threat of death would pass or that they could survive until an Allied victory. Those individuals or families who did manage to go into hiding faced innumerable hardships and the constant threat of discovery and certain death. Life in hiding meant for some Jews physical isolation and cramped hiding places for days and even months on end. For others it meant concealing their identities from new friends, classmates, and acquaintances, and taking on new names, religions, and identities. In all these situations, the choices were extremely difficult and the consequences potentially deadly if a child was discovered or betrayed.

A few Jewish families realized early on that Nazi rule put them in mortal danger. In some instances, they had time to prepare a well-equipped hiding-place and recruit a small number of non-Jewish friends as helpers. Other families had less time to plan—or no time at all. Sometimes young people suddenly found themselves alone and on the run, their relatives dead or scattered. In these cases, the question was not merely whether to hide, but where and how to go and whom to trust. Parents had to decide whether family members would be safer together or apart. Often there were no good options, only a choice of bad ones.

HARDSHIPS: LIFE IN HIDING

Hiding conditions varied widely. Some children could move around much of the time, as long as they stayed indoors and remained quiet and away from windows so that neighbors could not see them. They ran to concealed hiding places during raids. Other children endured dark, cramped conditions for weeks, months, or even years. Still others never found a permanent refuge, but moved continually from place to place. Almost every situation had its dangers, hardships, and frustrations.

Babies and toddlers might be taken in by non-Jews and raised as part of a loving family, knowing nothing of their real parents. In contrast, some young people wandered the countryside, sleeping in the woods or in farm sheds, eating vegetables dug out of fields. Whatever the season, their need for food and



During his years of hiding in a small apartment in Poland, Frederik Steinkeller had to be physically concealed whenever anyone came

to the door. Often Frederik hid in this wardrobe.

USHMM, THE ABRAHAM AND RUTH GOLDFARB FAMILY ACQUISITION FUND

warmth had to be balanced against the need to avoid police and hostile or suspicious villagers.

An alternative to hiding physically was to take on a new identity. Usually with the help of forged papers, money, and friends or strangers, children were passed off as members of non-Jewish families. Thousands of Jewish children survived because they were protected by people and institutions of other faiths.

Children quickly learned the prayers and rituals of their assumed religion in order to keep their Jewish identity hidden from even their closest friends. Children had to be quick-witted to fit in without raising suspicions.



Crosses worn by Charles Weingarten and his mother while passing as Catholics in France.

USHMM, GIFT OF CHARLES WEINGARTEN

They couldn't tell you where they [the rescuers] would take the children to. Because if you were caught, what you didn't know you couldn't tell, should you be tortured. My aunt wouldn't let her child go; she could not bring herself to let him go. My mom took the risk. We're alive, my little cousin is not.

—FLORA MENDELOWICZ, 12 YEARS OLD WHEN SHE WENT INTO HIDING FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN VARIOUS CONVENTS IN BELGIUM.

I also remember kneeling each evening in front of my bed to say my evening prayers. And part of the thing I would pray for, to Jesus and Mary, was that I wouldn't talk in my sleep and accidentally reveal that I was Jewish.

—LEON CHAMEIDES, WHO FROM THE AGE OF 7 TO THE AGE OF 9 HID IN A CHRISTIAN MONASTERY AND ORPHANAGE IN WESTERN UKRAINE.

Some young people managed to exist right under the noses of the Nazis themselves without being detected. An “Aryan” appearance—light hair, tall stature, and blue eyes—helped some children escape detection. Children who appeared “too Jewish” according to antisemitic stereotypes had to take extra precautions to avoid detection. Efforts were taken both by the children and by their rescuers to hide their “too Jewish” faces.

Life in hiding was always hazardous. Throughout German-occupied Europe, the Nazis made a concerted effort to locate Jews in hiding. Some hidden children were betrayed to the authorities; others were discovered by sheer bad luck. A few of these children left a record of their hopes, fears, and experiences through the journals, letters, and artwork that they left behind.



While in hiding, ten-year-old Hans Ament sent this letter to his mother along with “100,000,000 big kisses.” A month later Hans was discovered by the Germans and deported to his death at Auschwitz.

USHMM, GIFT OF ALFRED AMENT



Twelve-year-old Lida Kleinman (third from right, back row) scratched her face out of a school photograph (detail above) after being warned by one of the Catholic nuns that she looked “too Jewish.”

USHMM, GIFT OF LIDIA SICIARZ

QUEST FOR FAMILY

For those who survived, the end of the war was rarely the end of the struggle. Parents who survived sought out the children they had placed in hiding. Hidden children old enough to remember their biological parents searched for them. Some children too young to remember remained with their rescuers, while others were turned over to orphanages and relief agencies. The International Red Cross and Jewish relief organizations established tracing services to locate relatives, many in **displaced persons camps**, but the search for surviving family members could take months and even years. Most often, survivors found that they were the only members of their family to have remained alive. The homes and family life that Jewish parents and children had known before the war no longer existed. That world had been destroyed in the Holocaust.

The quest for family was much more than a search for relatives. For young children who had been hidden apart from their families, it often meant soul-searching to rediscover their true identities. Since they had no recollection of their biological

WHO HELPED HIDE JEWISH CHILDREN?

Although some Jews managed to elude the Germans and their collaborators on their own, many had to depend on aid from others. Finding a place to hide was only the first step. In most cases, survival also required someone to provide forged identity papers, to bring food and news, or to arrange transportation from one refuge to another. Many of those who stepped in to help were non-Jews, who risked arrest, deportation, or death for themselves and family members if they were caught.



This German poster from September 1942 threatens death to anyone aiding Jews who fled the Warsaw ghetto.
USHMM, GIFT OF THE INSTYTUT PAMIĘCI NARODWEJ-KOMISJA ŚCIGANIA ZBRODNI PRZECIWKO NARODOWI POLSKIEMU, WARSAW

Some took these risks only in return for money. Of these, some needed extra funds to maintain the hiding places, while others sought to exploit those whom they hid. Some even blackmailed desperate Jewish parents, threatening to turn a child in unless they received large sums. Other “rescuers”

agreed to shelter children, but neglected them or abused them physically or sexually.

At the other end of the spectrum, most rescuers showed great decency and kindness, sharing their own scarce food supplies and treating Jewish children no differently than their own. The risks for such activities were very great. Those rescuers who were caught were often sent to **concentration camps** or were put to death, sharing the fate of those they had protected.



Père Jacques de Jésus (born Lucien Bunel) was the headmaster of a Catholic boys school in Avon, France, which became a refuge for several Jewish boys. In January 1944, the Gestapo raided the school and Father Jacques was sent to various concentration camps. He died shortly after liberation.

COUVENT DES CARMES D'AVON, FRANCE

parents or their Jewish origins, many of these children perceived their rescuers as the only family that they knew. Even for older children who remembered their parents, life after their reunion could be difficult and create conflicting identities for many of them. Whether they were orphaned or reunited with family members, hidden child survivors rediscovered old identities, built new lives, and established new identities. Nevertheless, their experiences in hiding would follow them for many years.

PRESERVING MEMORY

Immediately after the war, Holocaust survivors began to document Nazi crimes against the Jewish people, to record their experiences, and to memorialize those who were killed. The efforts were often painful journeys into the past. Even though they had survived, hundreds of former hidden children recounted the especially difficult pain of their loss. Many sought to recover a past that the Nazis had

taken from them—to learn about families they had never known, or even, sometimes, to rediscover their own real names. Others were shocked to learn of being born Jewish.

Sharing these experiences can sometimes be difficult even 60 years after they happened. It means reliving suffering, loneliness, and loss. Some former hidden children choose not to face this ordeal. Others, however, feel that they have a responsibility to speak out, to bring an eyewitness account of the Holocaust to the world. For some, the telling brings healing and unexpected rewards.

In May of 1991, some 1,600 former hidden children came together in New York for the First International Gathering of Children Hidden during World War II to share their past experiences and to gain support from others who had endured similar fates. In August 2003, hundreds of former hidden children gathered in Washington, D.C., and had an opportunity to share their stories and to view the exhibition *Life in Shadows* at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

And so here I was with a shaved head and she looked at me and she said, “Are you my mother?” I said, “Yes, I’m your mother.” I didn’t come close to her. I didn’t touch her... I took her with me. And we had nothing. We had no bed. Nothing. I... felt I needed her. I needed her very much. We need our children more than they need us.

—HELEN WATERFORD, WHO SENT HER FIVE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, DORIS, INTO HIDING WITH A DUTCH CHRISTIAN FAMILY. HELEN WAS LATER DEPORTED TO AUSCHWITZ. BOTH SHE AND HER DAUGHTER SURVIVED AND WERE REUNITED IN 1945.



USHMM, GIFT OF ALINA ADAMCZAK

At age 18, “Jadwiga Kuzio” learned that she had been found as an infant in an empty apartment in the ghetto in the Polish city of Brest-Litovsk after the occupants had been deported. The only clue as to her true identity was that the apartment had belonged to a family named Goldberg. In January 2002, her daughter contacted the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where archival records revealed that the 61-year-old Jadwiga had originally been named Fradla Goldberg. This photograph shows Jadwiga (*left*) on the day of her First Communion.

GRADES 6–8

BEFORE VIEWING THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition *Life in Shadows* explores the lives of individuals who were forced to change or hide their identities in order to survive, and others who reclaimed a previous identity. After years of concealing their true identity, it was not always easy for hidden children to revert to the people they had been before the war. Many survivors struggled to link the present to the past. In certain cases, former hidden children spent years or even decades searching for a past identity that remained in the distant shadows of their memories.

The lives of the hidden children presented in the exhibition give a complex and sometimes confusing picture of human identity and the ways in which it can be altered, hidden, recreated, discovered, or even destroyed. The following discussions and activities are designed to help you begin to think about the complex nature of identity. They will help you gain a better appreciation for the experiences of these hidden children and give you a way of thinking about identity while you walk through the exhibition.

They tell you, “You are no longer such and such, but you are such and such.” You keep repeating it to yourself until you actually believe that you are this other person. And it gets extremely confusing.

—ANNA LEISER-KLEINHAUSER, WHO WITH HER MOTHER HID THEIR JEWISH IDENTITY BY PASSING AS CATHOLICS WHILE LIVING IN FRANCE.

Think about your own identity. What does identity mean to you?

—What makes you who you are?

Some possibilities to discuss:

- thoughts
- beliefs
- actions
- your name
- family history
- physical characteristics
- personality
- skills/talents
- language
- religious background
- your preferences in clothing, food, purchases, recreation, hobbies, and television and radio programs

—Which of these are you able to change? Which of these can't you change?

—Do you ever make a conscious effort to change any of these things? When and why does this happen?

—Do you know people who pretend to be what they're not? Why do you think they do this? Do you think it has an effect on them?

—Are you always the same, or are you different around certain people? If so, are you still always the same person inside? If actions are part of what defines you, and you act differently around different groups of people, then are you a different person depending on whom you're with?

—Do you know someone with whom you can always “be yourself”? What do you like or dislike about the self you are when you're with them?

Young people hiding during the Holocaust often had little choice as to whether or not they could change their identities; they had to change in order to survive. Some learned new languages, practiced new religions, took on new names, and even disguised the way they looked.

—How might a new language, religion, name, citizenship, or physical appearance change you?

—Would you give up any of these things voluntarily?

Why would you or wouldn't you?

ACTIVITY: GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF

On a piece of paper, write down something that you did today, three words that best describe how you are feeling right now or four objects in the room around you. Then add a sentence or two for each, giving more detail or telling why you feel the way you do.

This can be the start of a journal. Several of the hidden children featured in the exhibition kept journals or diaries. For them, as for tens of thousands of writers before and since—old, young, male, and female—a journal provided a place to express sadness and fear and find hope, especially when these feelings couldn't be communicated to other people. Writing about experiences and problems helped the writers see what was happening more clearly. Exploring their reactions helped them learn about themselves.

*I also think I shouldn't be writing all this.
I cannot imagine what would happen if they
found it, God forbid. On the other hand, I'm
so lonely. So many important things are
happening in the world arena.... I have to
express myself more often and... more sin-
cerely. I am reading what I have just written
and it seems to be very naïve and silly.
But this is my way of thinking.*

—ELSE BINDER, IN HER DIARY WRITTEN IN THE STANISŁAWÓW GHETTO, POLAND, DECEMBER 27, 1941.

Even when you are not struggling each day simply to stay alive as many of the hidden children did, your daily experiences—whether pleasant, boring, or sad—give you a lot to write about. In a journal, you can truly be yourself. You can assume different attitudes and personalities or express unpopular opinions without a penalty. A journal never makes fun of you, gets bored, or tells you off.

TRY THIS

- Write about your day. Write about your wishes and dreams, your worries and fears, or what bugs you. Or preserve these facts and feelings in a different way—in a poem or drawing.
- Put these pages in a large envelope and address it to yourself. On it, write today's date—and the same day, next week.
- A week from now, open the envelope and read what you've written. Then repeat the steps above. Add your latest pages to the envelope and close it up for another week.

WHILE AT THE EXHIBITION

Take a notebook or journal with you as you tour *Life in Shadows*. As you walk through the exhibition, look for three things among its objects, images, facts, people, and experiences that make a particularly strong impression on you. Write down a few words or even make a sketch to help you remember the details for later.

AFTER VIEWING THE EXHIBITION

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

- Choose one of the entries on the list you made as you went through *Life in Shadows*. Describe it to the class.
- Next, describe your reaction. Of the many objects, people, and stories in the exhibition, why did you react to that particular one? Did it remind you of some person or experience in your own life?

—Who were some of the hidden children featured in the exhibition? How did they hide?

—What did they have to give up when they went into hiding? How did their lives change? How did they themselves change?

—What problems and dangers did hidden children face and how did they deal with them?

—What were some of the things they did to play, to learn, to express themselves? What did these expressions say about what they hoped and feared?

—What happened to the children after the war? Were any of them able to go back to “normal life”? How did they build new identities?

Following the end of the war, it took some hidden children years and even decades to discover who they had been before going into hiding—their biological parents, their names, their ethnic and cultural backgrounds, their citizenship, their religion. These former hidden children often used a variety of documents, such as old pictures, letters, journals, government and school records, and information from people who had known their families, in order to reconstruct their previous identities.

Suppose that 50 years from now, someone will be searching to find out who you were. What would you want that researcher in the future to know about you? What message would you like to pass on to future generations—or even to yourself when you are 50 years older? What could you leave as a record of who you are now?

First, list the aspects of your identity that you would want to preserve for the future. (Think back to the discussion “What makes you who you are?”)

Collect various things that might reveal who you are. Things you might include on your list:

- A few photos of yourself, friends, or family—not too many!
- Objects that hold memories for you—a ticket stub, a dried flower, a school assignment from second grade, a favorite piece of clothing—whatever!
- Quotations from yourself, in your own handwriting
- Letters you’ve saved or written
- A journal you’ve been keeping
- Words or images clipped from magazines
- Your drawings or designs

Arrange the collection into a collage or scrapbook—or preserve them for the future in a state-of-the-art time capsule. Go to the Smithsonian Institution Web site www.si.edu/scmre/educationoutreach/tcread.htm to get the latest tips and information. Then go to the International Time Capsule Society home page, www.oglethorpe.edu/itcs/, to learn about the history of time capsules, how to store what you collect, how to choose a container, and register your capsule with the society.

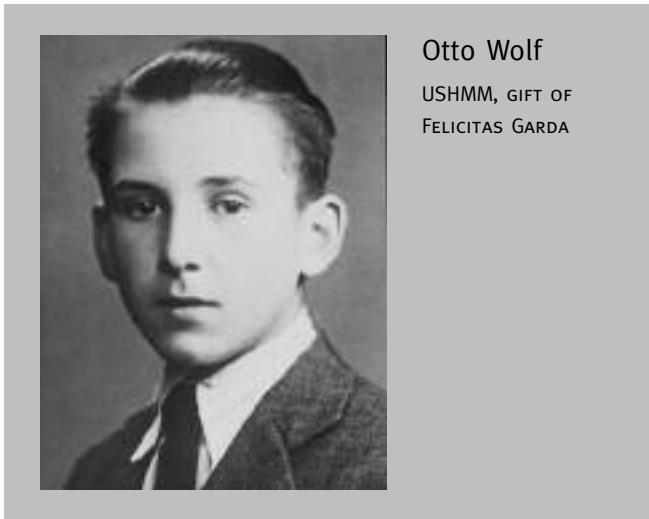
What if you created a scrapbook or a time capsule of yourself every year? How do you think the contents might change after two, five, ten, or 20 years?

GRADES 8–10

BEFORE VIEWING THE EXHIBITION

ACTIVITIES

Several of the individuals featured in the exhibition kept journals or diaries. For them, as for tens of thousands of writers—old, young, male, and female—a journal provided a place to record their experiences as well as a place to express anger, sadness, and fear and find hope, especially when these feelings could not be communicated to other people. Some of these teenage writers were very methodical, keeping a daily record of everything they ate, did, or saw throughout the entire day. Other writers used their journals periodically as a place to record their feelings and emotions that were private and would not otherwise be shared. Still others used their journal as a record that would later be shared with friends and family.

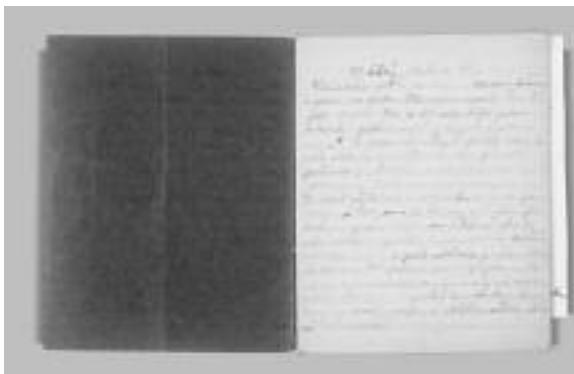


Otto Wolf
USHMM, GIFT OF
FELICITAS GARDA

Fortunately, a few of these journals written during the Holocaust have been preserved for us to read today. These provide us a direct link to the past and enable us to encounter firsthand the voices of those who lived and died during the Holocaust. A journal from the past gives us a unique, and personal, perspective that usually cannot be conveyed by a textbook.

In preparation for your visit to the exhibition *Life in Shadows*, read a journal or diary kept by an individual during the Holocaust. You will find a list of these in the Suggested Reading list at the end of this guide. After reading the journal, choose one or more of the activities below.

- A. Based on what you have read, write a two- to three-page description of the writer. What type of individual do you think the writer was? What insights were you able to gain about his or her personality, ambitions, and temperament?
- B. Find out more about the writer's life. Where did the writer live before or during the time he or she was writing the journal? Was his or her experience similar to or different from those of other people during the Holocaust? Do some research to find out more about the country, city, or ghetto in which the writer lived during that period. What was daily life like for others? The Web site of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is a good place to begin your research; there you can find pictures, maps, and even video clips of many of these places. You might even be able to find photos and additional information relating to the writer.
- C. The journal you read is only one person's experiences and recollections. Many times the writer



Fifteen-year-old Otto Wolf (*above, left*) began keeping a diary (*left*) after he and his family fled into the forests around his hometown of Mohelnice, Czechoslovakia, to avoid deportation. For several years, the family moved from hideout to hideout. In 1945, Otto was caught several weeks before the war ended and was executed. He was only 17 years old.

USHMM, GIFT OF FELICITAS GARDA

had little knowledge of the larger picture of what was happening elsewhere. As you read the journal, write down dates that were important to the writer—when the journal was started, when he or she had to move or go into hiding. You might even be able to determine when he or she was born. Then, using the Timeline in this guide, create a new timeline of the writer’s life that includes the important dates from the journal as well as the major dates/milestones of World War II and the Holocaust.

- D. Even when you are not struggling each day simply to stay alive as many of the hidden children did, your daily experiences—whether happy or sad—are important and give you a lot to write about. You can keep a journal to record your daily experiences for the future or use as a place to express your personal emotions and feelings. In either case, the journal becomes a record of your life.
- Write about your day. Write about your wishes and dreams, your worries and fears, what bugs you. Or preserve these thoughts and feelings in a different way—in a poem or drawing.
 - Put those pages in a large envelope and address it to yourself. On it, write both today’s date and the same day next week.
 - A week from now, open the envelope and read what you wrote. Then repeat the steps above. Add your latest pages to the envelope and close it up for another week.

WHILE AT THE EXHIBITION

Take a notebook or journal with you as you tour *Life in Shadows*. As you walk through the exhibition, write down the names and stories of two individuals featured in the exhibition. Record as many details as you

can about them, including country of origin, where they hid, how they hid, amount of time in hiding.

AFTER VIEWING THE EXHIBITION

ACTIVITIES

- A. Read a memoir written by a hidden child. You can find a list to choose from in the Suggested Reading list at the end of this guide. How does his or her experience differ from those you saw in the exhibition? Write a two- to three-page paper that highlights these differences and similarities.
- B. The children who went into hiding during the Holocaust were only a very small percentage of the total Jewish population of Europe. Pick one of the individuals that you recorded information about while in the exhibition. While he or she was in hiding, what was happening to the Jews in that country who did not go into hiding? Do some research to find out more about the larger situation in that particular country. The Web site of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is a good place to begin. Then, create a timeline that chronicles Nazi policies against the Jews in that country. Begin your timeline from the date when the German authorities gained control of that country and continue it until the time when they were defeated or driven out. At what point did your individual go into hiding?
- C. Read a memoir written by a hidden child. As you read it, create a list of all the factors that were necessary for the author of that memoir as well as the two individuals you saw featured in the exhibition to hide and escape detection. Then, create a second list of factors that constantly threatened to expose them. As you look at your two lists, can you see any one “formula” that made it possible for individuals in hiding to survive? What do these lists reveal about the daily realities of life in hiding?

TIMELINE

1933

(January 30) Adolf Hitler, leader of the National Socialist German Workers Party, or Nazis, becomes Chancellor of Germany.

(February–April) German government suspends the right to basic freedoms, such as freedom of speech, assembly, and press. Laws are passed to remove Jews from government jobs, including schoolteachers.

1935

(September 15) In Germany, laws are passed that aim to deprive Jews of their German citizenship.

1938

(November 9–10) Across Germany, Nazis burn synagogues and loot Jewish businesses and homes during the “The Night of Broken Glass” (*Kristallnacht*).

1939

(September 1) World War II begins when Germany invades Poland, overwhelming the Polish army in a matter of weeks. Approximately 1.6 million Jewish children live in areas that Germany and its Axis allies will ultimately control.

1940

(April) The first major ghetto at Łódź in German-occupied Poland is sealed.

(April–June) German troops invade and occupy Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the northern part of France.

1941

(March 24) German forces in North Africa begin their offensive.

(April 6) Germany and other Axis powers invade Yugoslavia and Greece.

(June 22) Germany invades the Soviet Union; mobile killing squads follow the German army, murdering Soviet Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and persons institu-

alized with disabilities as well as officials of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet government.

(December) The first killing center begins gassing operations in German-occupied Chełmno, Poland.

1942

(Spring–Summer) Systematic mass murder of Jews in gas chambers begins at other killing centers in German-occupied Poland, including Auschwitz-Birkenau and Treblinka.

(June–September) German SS and police authorities deport more than 300,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka.

1943

(April 19–May 16) Remaining Jews in the Warsaw ghetto resist with arms against the Germans.

1944

(March 19) German army occupies Hungary.

(June 6) Allied powers launch D-Day invasion of German-occupied France.

1945

(April 30) Hitler commits suicide.

(May 8) World War II officially ends in Europe. At war’s end, only 6–11 percent of the Jewish children of Europe remain alive.

1947

(June) The diary of Anne Frank—the best known of the hidden children—is published in the Netherlands.

1991

(May) Some 1,600 former hidden children gather together in New York City for the “First Gathering of Children Hidden during World War II.”

2003

(September) The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum’s exhibition *Life in Shadows: Hidden Children and the Holocaust* opens in Washington, D.C.

VOCABULARY

Antisemitism—Ideology of prejudice against Jews that often advocates discrimination against them.

“Aryan”—Originally, this was a term for peoples speaking the Indo-European languages spanning from Europe to India, but it was used by the Nazis to designate someone of a supposed German “master race.” For the Nazis, the ideal “Aryan” was tall, blond, and blue-eyed.

Concentration camps—German authorities constructed camps to imprison Jews, Roma (Gypsies), political and religious opponents, homosexuals, and others considered to be enemies of the state. Before the end of World War II, the Germans had created between 30 and 40 major concentration camps with hundreds of satellite camps across the areas of Europe they occupied.

Deport—To remove or expel someone from or to another country or place.

Displaced persons camps—These were established after World War II to provide temporary shelter and relief for individuals who were unable or unwilling to return home because of postwar antisemitism or destruction of their communities. Displaced persons (DP) camps were important centers for survivors searching for their families. More than 250,000 Jewish DPs lived in camps between 1945 and 1952.

Ghetto—As it relates to the Holocaust, the term refers to an area of a city or town, usually the poorest, where the Germans forcibly confined the Jewish population. Before the end of World War II, the Germans established hundreds of ghettos in the countries they occupied. Ghettos were usually surrounded by barbed wire or walls to “seal in” the Jews.

Holocaust—Literally, the word “holocaust” means a massive devastation or destruction, especially by fire, a burnt sacrifice. The term “Holocaust” with a capital *h* refers to 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; Gypsies (Roma), the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

Jews—People whose religion is Judaism or who identify themselves as Jews. Jews were the primary victims of the Holocaust—six million were killed. The central tenet of Judaism is the belief in one God, and the primary religious texts of Judaism are the Hebrew Bible (known by the acronym TANAKH, which stands for the Torah or Five Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings), the Mishnah, and the Talmud.

Killing centers—These were camps established by the German SS (the elite guard of the Nazi state) and police for the exclusive or primary purpose of carrying out the mass killing of large numbers of human beings—Jews and others—by poison gas, shooting, or other means. Among the killing centers in German-occupied Poland were Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, and Bełżec. Up to 2.7 million Jews were murdered during operations in the killing centers, as were an indeterminate number of Gypsies, Soviet prisoners of war, Poles, and others.

Nazi—This is the short term for a member or follower of the National Socialist German Workers Party, a right-wing, nationalistic, antisemitic political party formed in 1919 and headed by Adolf Hitler from 1921 to 1945. The Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933 and, backed by a significant percentage of the German population at large, embarked on a course that led to World War II and the Holocaust.

Racism—Ideology that postulates (1) that human behavior and actions are determined solely by inherited biological characteristics that are not subject to change; (2) that human beings behave and act not according to individual will and conscience, but

according to the alleged common biological characteristics of their “race”; and (3) that certain “races” are superior to others. Hitler and other Nazi leaders viewed Jews not as a religious group, but as an inferior “race,” which “lived off” the other “races” with the intent to weaken them in preparation for destroying their culture, their creativity, and their collective will to live as a nation.

Star of David—Six-pointed star often used as a symbol of the Jewish religion. The Nazis transformed this religious and cultural symbol into a badge for identifying, segregating, and humiliating Jews.

SUGGESTED READING ON HIDDEN CHILDREN

DIARIES

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl, by Anne Frank (Bantam Books, 1995). This is a classic, very personal account of a Jewish girl growing up during the Holocaust years. (Middle School and up.)

Children in the Holocaust and World War II: Their Secret Diaries, by Laurel Holliday (Pocket Books, 1995). An anthology of diaries written by children in German-occupied Europe, these writings of 23 boys and girls aged ten through 18 illustrate the diverse experiences of children during World War II and the Holocaust. (Middle School and up.)

The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak: Five Notebooks from the Łódź Ghetto, edited by Alan Adelson (Oxford University Press, 1996). Dawid Sierakowiak was a 15-year-old boy in the Łódź ghetto in German-occupied Poland when he began writing this diary, which provides a vivid account of daily life in the ghetto. (High School and up.)

Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust, by Alexandra Zapruder (Yale University Press, 2002). This is a stirring collection of diaries reflecting a diverse range of experiences. (Middle School and up.)

We Are Witnesses: Five Diaries of Teenagers Who Died in the Holocaust, by Jacob Boas (Henry Holt, 1995). These are the stories of five young Jews, including Anne Frank, whose diaries describe their observations and feelings during the Holocaust. (Middle School and up.)

MEMOIRS

Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family, by Miep Gies with Alison Leslie Gold (Simon and Schuster, 1988). Gies and her husband helped the Frank family while they were in hiding. Her account helps readers understand

what happened, both inside and outside the Secret Annex. (High School and up.)

Behind the Secret Window: A Memoir of a Hidden Childhood during World War Two, by Nelly S. Toll (Dial, 1993). Toll tells of 18 months in hiding with her mother and shares watercolor paintings she created during that difficult period. (Middle School and up.)

Clara's Story, by Clara Isaacman and Joan A. Grossman (Jewish Publication Society, 1984). Clara and her family fled antisemitism in Romania to Belgium in 1940, then were caught up in the Nazi invasion of that country. By constantly moving from one hiding place to another, everyone but Clara's father survived. (Middle School and up.)

Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood, by Nechama Tec (Oxford University Press, 1984). The author and her family were Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust by passing as non-Jews and hiding. She describes her childhood experiences as seen through the child's eyes, but with the added perspective of her adult perception. (Middle School and up.)

The Hidden Children: The Secret Survivors of the Holocaust, by Jane Marks (Ballantine, 1993). This book recounts a wide variety of experiences of hidden children and their subsequent lives after World War II, collected from participants in the "First Gathering of Children Hidden during World War II" in New York City. (Middle School and up.)

In the Mouth of the Wolf, by Rose Zar (Jewish Publication Society, 1983). This is a memoir of a Polish Jew who fled the Piotrków ghetto and survived by hiding under a false identity. (Middle School and up.)

The Lost Childhood, by Yehuda Nir (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991). This compelling memoir tells of six extraordinary years in the life of a Polish Jewish boy, his mother, and his sister, who survived the Holocaust by posing as Catholics. (High School and up.)

Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust, by Gay Block and Malka Drucker (Holmes and Meier, 1992). This book features interviews with 49 individuals from ten countries who risked their lives to help Jews by hiding them, sharing their food rations, forging documents, and raising Jewish children as their own. (Middle School and up).

OTHER RESOURCES

Au Revoir les Enfants (103 min). This feature film documents the story of a Catholic schoolboy and his Jewish friend who is sheltered at the school by a courageous French priest. After an act of betrayal, the Gestapo deports the Jewish youngster and the priest to Auschwitz.

Children in the Holocaust (70 min). Depicting the plight of Jewish children during the Holocaust from the viewpoint of the now grown survivors, this film is a candid and personal account of the terrors of the period as seen through their eyes.

Europa, Europa (115 min). This feature film is based on the true story of Solomon Perel, a German-Jewish teenager who survived the Holocaust by passing as an "Aryan"—even joining the Hitler Youth—over a period of seven years and in three countries.

www.adl.org/hidden—This Web site of The Hidden Children Foundation includes a speakers bureau to help schools locate former hidden children who can come to talk to students.

www.adl.org/children_holocaust/children_main1.asp—This Anti-Defamation League site on children in the Holocaust includes a teachers guide as well as first-hand accounts from survivors, some of whom were hidden children.

www.annefrank.nl/eng/default2.html—This is the Web site of the Anne Frank House, now a museum in Amsterdam, and offers online tours and more.

www.diarist.net—This site offers a comprehensive starting point for both writers and readers of online journals.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Web site, www.ushmm.org, offers extensive resources on every aspect of the Holocaust. Teachers are invited to order or download a free teaching packet from the Education Division of the Museum, including the helpful resource book *Teaching about the Holocaust*.

OTHER GENERAL SOURCES ON HOLOCAUST HISTORY

Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust, by Susan D. Bachrach (Little, Brown, 1994). The author outlines the Holocaust as presented at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in brief, thematic segments illustrated by artifacts and historical photos. The book also features the personal stories of 20 young people. (Middle School and up.)

The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust as Told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, by Michael Berenbaum (Little, Brown, 1993). This book includes more than 200 photos from the Museum's archives and artifact collections and many eyewitness accounts from the Museum's oral history and video collections.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is America's national institution for the documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history, and serves as this country's memorial to the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust. The Museum's primary mission is to advance and disseminate knowledge about this unprecedented tragedy, to preserve the memory of those who suffered, and to encourage its visitors to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy.

Chartered by a unanimous Act of Congress in 1980 and located adjacent to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the Museum strives to broaden public understanding of the history of the Holocaust through multifaceted programs: exhibitions; research and publication; collecting and preserving material evidence, art, and artifacts relating to the Holocaust; annual Holocaust commemorations known as the Days of Remembrance; distribution of educational materials and teacher resources; and a variety of public programming designed to enhance understanding of the Holocaust and related issues, including those of contemporary significance.

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SOURCES FOR QUOTATIONS

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Else Binder, diary entry of December 27, 1941, in Alexandra Zapruder, *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust* (Yale University Press, 2002), p. 308.

Leon Chameides, oral testimony video, exhibition segment "Daily Life" in *Life in Shadows*.

Anna Leiser-Kleinhauser, oral testimony video, exhibition segment "Daily Life" in *Life in Shadows*.

Flora Mendelowicz (Flora Singer), oral testimony video, exhibition segment "Choices" in *Life in Shadows*.

Helen Waterford, oral testimony video, exhibition segment "Quest for Family" in *Life in Shadows*.