

A Teacher's Guide

IN THE BIRCH WOODS OF BELARUS:

A Partisan's Revenge

By Sidney Simon

with Rosalie Simon and Maryann McLoughlin

Guide prepared by Courtney Julia Sands
with Maryann McLoughlin

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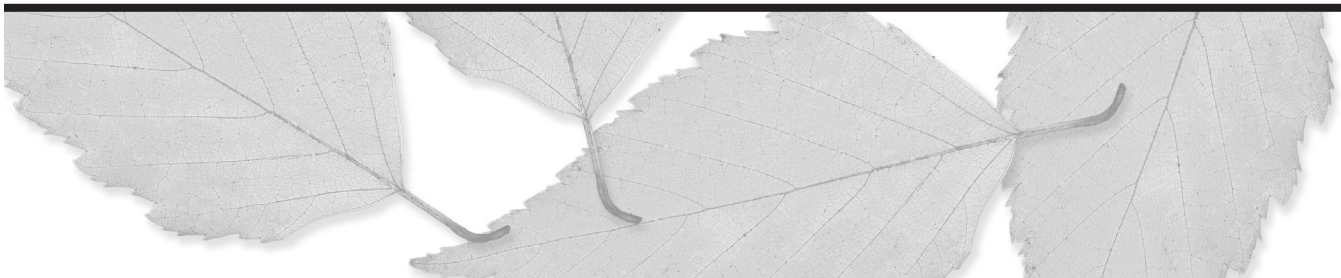
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THE MEANING OF THE MEMOIR'S TITLE

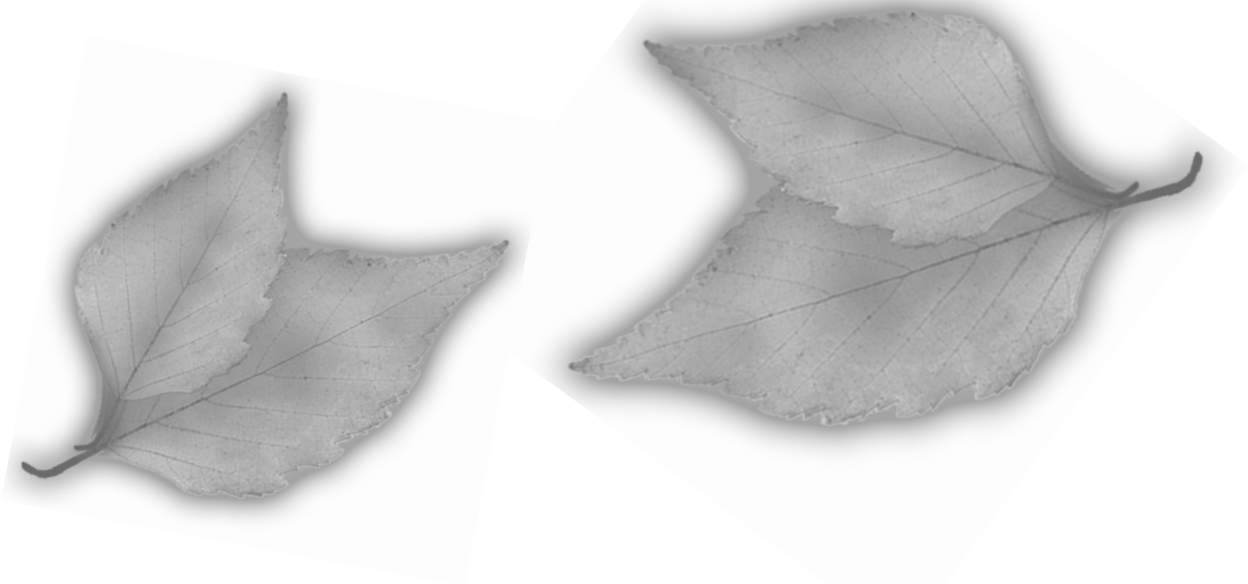
In the Birch Woods of Belarus: A Partisan's Revenge

The title, *In the Birch Woods of Belarus: A Partisan's Revenge*, refers to a young boy's story of revenge and survival during the Holocaust. Sidney's journey starts off in his home country Belitze, Poland (now Belarus), where he is faced with antisemitism and brutality from his neighbors, peers, and the German Army. Sidney and his family are forced into the Zetel Ghetto and luckily escape before the liquidation of the ghetto in April 1942. (Zetel also known as Zdzieciol: Polish and Zhetel: Yiddish.)

Sidney Simon was only a young boy in his early teens when he joined a group of partisans in the birch woods of Belarus to fight the German Army and sabotage their facilities during World War II. After the brutal murder of his brother Mojshe, Sidney stops at nothing to revenge the death of his brother.

THE TIME PERIOD

The time period of this memoir, *A Partisan's Revenge*, refers to the years of Sidney's struggle to survive and his involvement with the partisans during World War II. Each chapter details an important memory of Sidney's past. The chapters are short. We see the world through the survivor's eyes in different situations, as a child, a boy, and as a man. Many survival stories talk about the brutality of the ghettos and the concentration camps, but this particular story talks about an individual's personal struggle to seek revenge and survive. Sidney must adapt to unknown territories and rely instinctually on himself.



THE TWO PARTS OF THE MEMOIR

Following the timeline of events, the memoir can be divided into two parts. The first part, chapters one through twenty-three, is Sidney's survival story, and the second, chapters twenty-four through thirty-three, is his immigration to the United States and his struggle to succeed in a new country.



Sidney Simon in Soviet uniform, Post-WWII



BIOGRAPHY

Sidney Simon was born in Belitze, Poland, on August 15, 1925. Belitze prior to World War I belonged to Belarus, but then became a part of Poland. Belitze is located on the Neman River where Sidney spent a large portion of his time growing up. Sidney had a happy childhood with fond memories of the River Neman. His father, Samuel Shimenovich, owned a restaurant and liquor store, and his mother, Czerna, owned her own shoe-store business. Sidney had two brothers, Mojshe and Richard, and two sisters, Katie and Ida. Sidney and his family lived quite comfortably until the war when they were thrown out of their homes and forced to relocate into the ghetto.

Sidney's memoir tells his story of survival in chronological order. In the early stages of the war he shares details of the horrific events of death and brutality that he had seen. Sidney witnessed the deaths of his aunt, uncle, and small cousin. The memory of German brutality was carried with him on his journey. This hatred will be seen once again after he learns of the brutal death his brother Mojshe faced after being captured by the Germans.

While Sidney was hiding in the woods as a partisan, he learns that his brother was tortured and his flesh thrown to the dogs to be eaten. The Nazis used Mojshe as an example to install fear into the public. We learn that the Germans would use propaganda to exaggerate the partisan's successes into failures to discourage anyone from joining or aiding in the survival of any partisan member. Sidney's anger and hatred grew. While in the *Istrabitsky Battalion*, Sidney killed a German soldier in cold blood revenging the murders of his family, especially his brother's murder.

After Sidney's involvement with the partisans, he returned to his parents. He later joined the Red Army until the war ended in May 1945. While in the army, Simon takes comfort in the help of a Major Dostavalov, a leader in the Communist party. The major took care of Sidney like a son when he was recuperating from drinking tainted wine. Sidney's relationship with Major Dostavalov kept him from fighting on the Eastern front and out of harm's way. With Major Dostavalov's sponsorship, Sidney was able to become a *Komsomol* member; Komsomol was the youth wing of the Communist party.



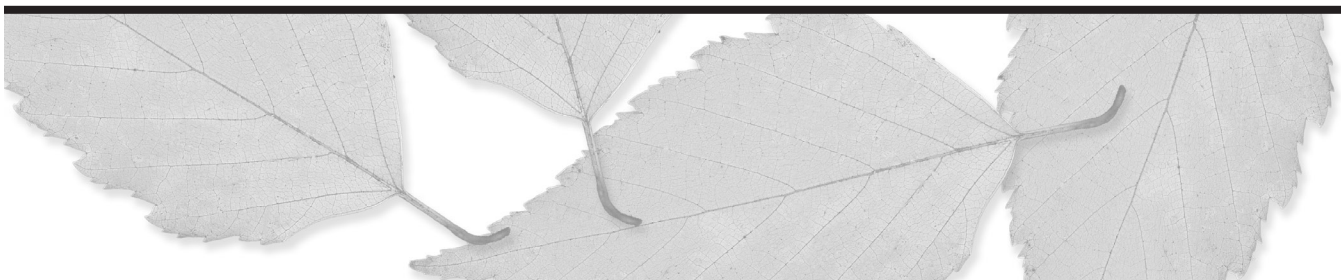


Komsomol Pin

wikimedia commons

After the war Sidney made several transfers to different DP Camps until immigrating to the United States with his family. Sidney worked several odds-and-end jobs until he created his own scrap metal business. His evolving life and growing family took him from Baltimore, Maryland, to a farm in Pleasantville, New Jersey, and then finally Margate, NJ, where he resides to this day.

The Holocaust did not shape Sidney's life nor define who he is as an individual. He adapted to his surroundings and revenged the death of his brother. Through his hatred for the Third Reich, Sidney fought against the Germany Army in World War II. His actions are heroic, and his story is important to share in hopes of teaching others and stopping the crime of genocide. His story is also important because Sidney is a role model of resilience, immigrating to the U.S. and prospering in a new land.





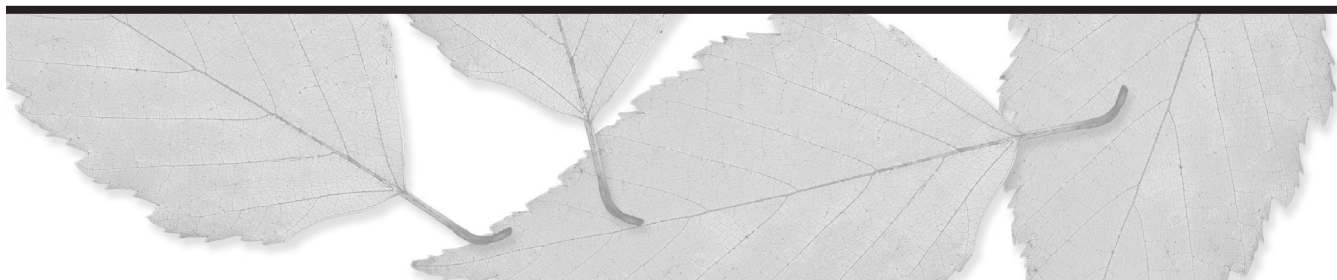
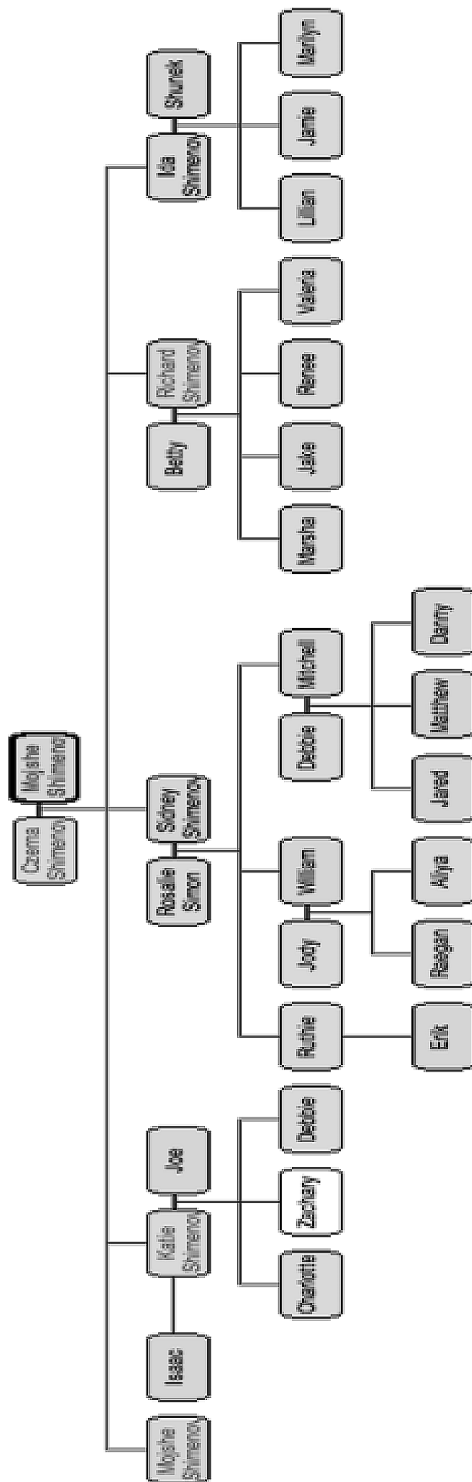
Sidney & Rosalie Simon at Sidney's 60th Birthday, 1985



Rosalie, Sidney, Richard (Sidney's brother), Betty (Richard's wife), Shunek (Ida's husband), and Ida (Sidney's sister)



SIDNEY SIMON'S FAMILY TREE



ORGANIZATION OF THE MEMOIR

Organization

The thirty-five chapters of *A Partisan's Revenge* are the personal memories of the specific events that happened to Holocaust survivor Sidney Simon during World War II and after.

Chapters 1-3: *Childhood Memories*

Simon discusses his early childhood before the Nazis invaded Belitze, Poland. He recalls antisemitism among the townspeople, and the early discrimination he felt while in school. Simon also discusses the country splitting into two.

Chapters 4-8: *Sacrifice and Loss*

Simon describes the alteration of life once the Germans came into Poland. Destruction of their city was inevitable. Houses were burned, and people were rounded up and murdered. Simon's father went missing after Simon and his family fled to the Neman River. His father escaped death by pretending to be dead when he was shot with fellow townspeople. We learn what happened while he was missing. With the rise of hatred and fear, Mojshe flees to the partisans leaving his family behind. Germans destroy their city and view the death and destruction of others as a form of a game.

Chapters 9 & 10: *Persecution and Resistance*

Simon and his family are forced to move into the Zetel Ghetto. They escape the ghetto's liquidation and hide on a local farm for safety. Simon and his family witness the horrible death of their relatives and flee to the woods for safety. Simon begins fighting the Germans with the partisans.

Chapters 11-12: *Duties and Understandings*

Simon discusses the type of duties and missions he was responsible for during his time as a partisan. The reality of what occurred and continues to occur begins to build up as rage in Simon. He is almost overcome by feelings of revenge.

Chapters 13 & 14: *Discovering the Truth*

Simon is sent on a raid with Jankel and pleads with him to learn the true story of his brother Mojshe's death.

Chapter 15-17: *Vengeance of Loved Ones*

Simon left the partisans after the Soviets advanced and defeated the Germans at the Battle of Stalingrad in Russia in 1943. He then was recruited and joined the *Istrabitsky's Battalion*, which was established by the Soviet military to keep order in the occupied territories. Here Simon sought revenge for his brother's death by killing German soldiers. When he returned home to his parents, he discovered that rumors of these killings had reached his parents.

Chapter 18-23: *The End Stages*

Simon begins fighting in the Red Army and builds a relationship with a major who aids in his survival until the war is over in 1945. Simon and his family live in DP Camps until they immigrate to the United States.

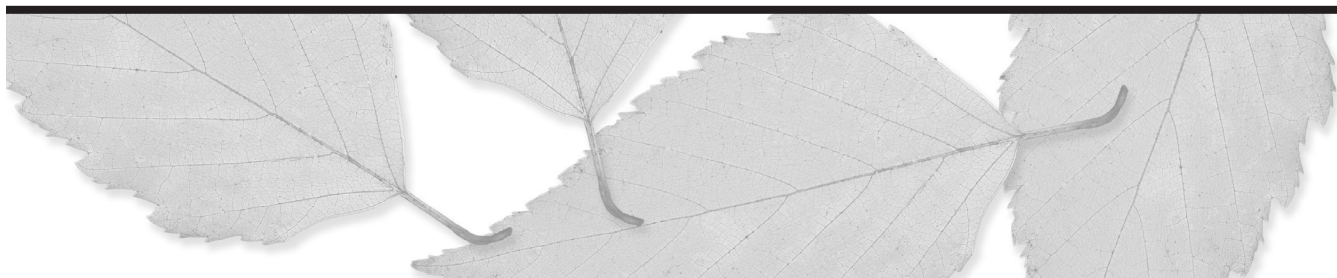
Chapter 24-35: *Building a New Life*

Simon discusses his life in the United States and the different jobs he worked while trying to make a new life. He marries his wife, Rosalie, starts a successful business, but gives that all up to move to New Jersey for the sake of his ill child. He raises three children and finally settles in Margate, NJ.





Belarus Post WWI to 1939, Lida circled jewishgen





Contemporary Map of Belarus, Lida circled *cia.gov*



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To understand the Third Reich's domination, it is important to review the rise of Nazism in Germany and its expansion throughout Europe in the thirties and during the war years (1939-45).

THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC 1919- 1933

THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES 1918-1919

The Treaty of Versailles set the terms for peace in Europe after World War I. The victorious Allied Powers excluded Germany from negotiations. In the treaty the Allies placed sole responsibility for World War I on Germany and stripped Germany of colonies and valuable European territories. Germany also had to pay reparations for civilian damages incurred during the war. Germans of many different backgrounds expressed dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Versailles. Not only did they feel the Jews, Communists, and political dissidents had “stabbed Germany in the back,” but they also regarded the democratic Weimar Republic as a form of government alien to German tradition.

THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC

After the Allies defeated Germany in 1918, the Kaiser fled to the Netherlands for asylum while a group of democratic politicians in Berlin proclaimed the establishment of the Weimar Republic to replace the imperial government. The president of the new republic was Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934), a Field Marshall during World War I.

The National Socialist German Workers' Party, that came to be known as the Nazis, was one of the scores of Weimar political parties that criticized the Republic for agreeing to sign the Versailles Treaty. Adolf Hitler, born in Austria in 1889 and a soldier in the German army during World War I, became leader, or Führer, of the Nazi Party in 1921. Hitler and the Nazi Party blamed Jews and political radicals for the weakened state of Germany.

From the Nazi perspective, the creation of a master race of Germans—“Aryans”—required the elimination of Jews. Despite the fact that Jews had contributed to German culture and professions and that thousands of Jewish males had served the fatherland in World War I, the Nazis cited Jews as the main cause of the degeneration of German vitality and creativity. According to the Nazis, as long as Jews remained in Germany, they threatened to “infect” the master race. Other groups that the Nazis considered threatening to the purity of the Aryan nation were the mentally and physically handicapped, Gypsies (Roma and Sinti), homosexuals, Slavic peoples, Jehovah's Witnesses, blacks (especially African Germans), and political dissidents.

During the Weimar Republic, the Nazis gained support primarily in the southern German state of Bavaria. Between 1924 and 1929, when the German economy began to prosper, the majority of Germans regarded



Nazis as thugs. However, with the onset of the worldwide Depression in 1929, greater numbers of Germans began listening to the Nazi message.

THE EARLY YEARS OF NAZISM IN POWER (1933-1939)

On January 30, 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor. He swiftly dismantled the Republic, establishing a totalitarian regime. Less than two months after coming to power, on March 23, 1933, the Reichstag (German Parliament) dissolved itself, and from then on Hitler ruled by decree. All political parties except the Nazis were outlawed. Churches, labor unions, and youth organizations became tools of the Nazi state. Every medium of communication was used to mold public opinion. Symbols of the Republic disappeared, replaced by symbols of the Nazis.

A great number of limitations were imposed on the Jewish minority. The Nazis began to put their anti-Jewish measures into effect shortly after Hitler's appointment. Over the next six years, these measures escalated, and it became increasingly difficult for Jews to make a living or lead normal lives. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 comprised two laws: The first law, *The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor*, prohibited marriage and extramarital intercourse between Jews and Germans and also the employment of German females under forty-five in Jewish households. The second law, *The Reich Citizenship Law*, stripped Jews of their German citizenship; therefore, they could no longer vote or hold office.

Approximately 400 anti-Jewish measures were imposed as well on other non-Aryan groups such as Gypsies and homosexuals, as well as the handicapped, dissidents, and blacks. For example, in July 1933, sterilization measures were approved for mentally and physically handicapped. Gypsies were increasingly segregated from German society, and homosexual and political dissidents were imprisoned in the early concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald. In 1937, black children born of German women with African husbands were designated for sterilization.

HISTORY OF BELITZE

PHRASE

Belitze is a town located in southern Poland. In the beginning of World War II over 6,000 Jewish residents lived in the city, but nearly 4,000 fled when the Germans arrived destroying all the synagogues and Jewish community buildings. By the end of 1939 the city had established a *Judenrat* (a Council of Elders) and a ghetto. By 1942 the ghetto was liquidated and the remaining Jews were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Many individuals who remained in the ghetto fled into hiding, but many others were instantly killed. Many were killed because they were selected for clean up duty after the liquidation and were no longer needed. Others were killed because they did not properly follow the orders of the guards. Victims that were found hiding were killed as an example of what would happen to others if they tried to hide as well.

To understand Sidney and the are in which he lived before the Holocaust, it is important to understand the history of Belitze.



BELARUS

“Occupied by the Russian empire from the end of the 18th century until 1918, Belarus declared its short-lived National Republic on March 25, 1918, only to be forcibly absorbed by the Bolsheviks into what became the Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.). Suffering devastating population losses under German Nazi occupation, including mass executions of 800,000 Jews, Belarus was retaken by the Soviets in 1944. It declared its sovereignty on July 27, 1990, and independence from the Soviet Union on August 25, 1991. It has been run by the authoritarian leader Alyaksandr Lukashenka since 1994.” (“Belarus”)

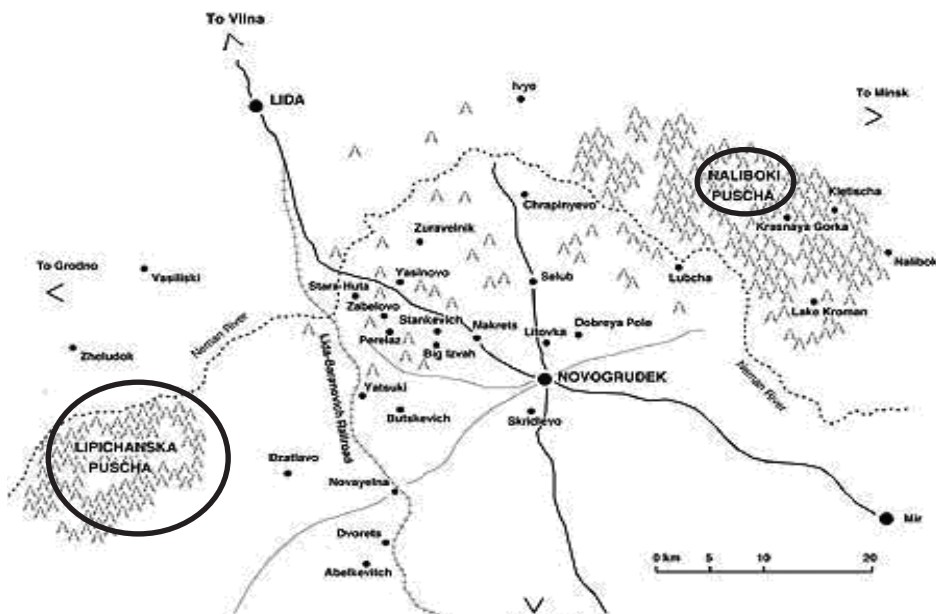
ZETEL GHETTO

November 1941, the mayor ordered all the Jews of Belarus to wear the Yellow Star of David on the front and back of their clothing. They were then ordered to leave Belitze and go to a designated ghetto by February 22, 1942. Simon and his family relocated to the Zetel (Russian: Zhatlava) Ghetto, which was surrounded by a wooden wall with barbed wire on the top. Here Simon and his family lived with three other families in one house and all shared their food, flour, and potatoes. The liquidation of the ghetto was planned for April 1942. Simon and his family escaped shortly before the inhabitants of the ghetto were transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau or killed in the ghetto.

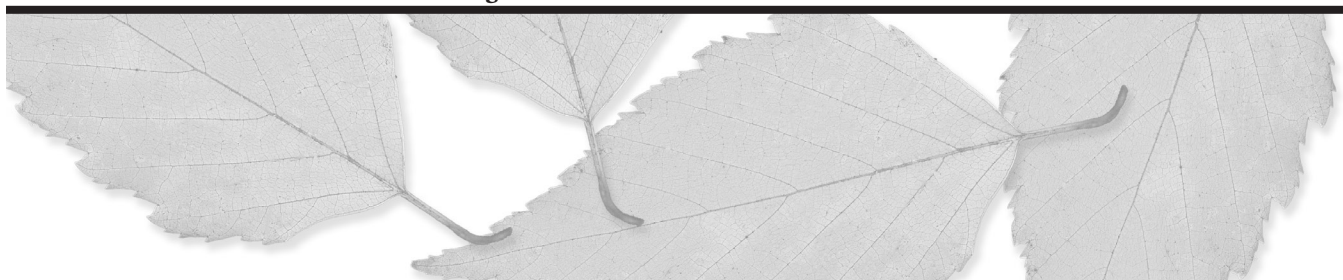
PARTISANS

“Some Jews who managed to escape from ghettos and camps formed their own fighting units. These fighters, or partisans, were concentrated in densely wooded areas. A large group of partisans in occupied Soviet territory hid in a forest near the Lithuanian capital of Vilna. They were able to derail hundreds of trains and kill over 3,000 German soldiers. Life as a partisan in the forest was difficult, people had to move from place

to place to avoid discovery, raid farmers’ food supplies to eat, and try to survive the winter in flimsy shelters built from logs and branches. In some places, partisans received assistance from local villagers, but more often they could not count on help, partly because of widespread antisemitism, partly because of people’s fears of being severely punished for helping. The partisans lived in constant danger of local informers revealing their whereabouts to the Germans”



Naliboki and Lipichanska Puscha (Dense forest)
novogrudok.co.uk



("Partisans"). Sidney went on a number of missions with the partisans. The most famous was the burning of the bridge over the Neman River.

In 1942, Simon joined a group of partisans after he escaped the Zetel Ghetto. Most people could not enter without their own rifles. Because his brother had been a partisan, Simon was given a gun found buried in the soil.

DISPLACED PERSONS (DP) CAMPS

After the war was over in Europe in May 1945, the Allies liberated over eleven million prisoners of war (POWs) and displaced persons (DPs). The Allies had a strong desire to send them home, with the intent of "reactivating their countries economies" (Bauer 370). But it wasn't as simple as that. Jews numbering about 200,000 were liberated from the concentration camps, with many deciding to go to DP camps to live. However, 55,000 Polish and Lithuanian Jews stuck in German slave labor camps in 1945 had no place to go. Those who tried to return to their hometowns were "met with hostility by their neighbors, many of whom had profited from looted Jewish property" (Bauer 371). Many Jewish survivors wanted to immigrate to Palestine. The *Haganah*, the Jewish armed underground organization, helped get many of these individuals to DP camps in Western Europe, where the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was located, and from there to Palestine.

Often Holocaust survivors would be in camps with non-Jewish Poles or Nazi collaborators, so they wanted separate camps where they would feel safe after all they had been through (Bauer 371). The United States and Great Britain thought the survivors should return to their homes, but many Polish Jews refused to return to their own homes, not only because of a desire to go to other countries, but also because of the antisemitism that greeted Jews who did try to return home. Many people, fearing survivors would report them as Nazi collaborators, murdered dozens of Jews (Bauer 373). The Polish government tried to get Jews to return as well and help rebuild communities but "it was impossible, psychologically, to reestablish a thriving Jewish life in a graveyard" (Bauer 374).

American opinion was affected not only by guilt related to the Holocaust, but also by letters from soldiers who described the horrors they had seen in the camps. In 1945, President Truman had Princeton law professor Earl G. Harrison examine the DP camp situation. Harrison accused the United States Army of negligence and of not supplying proper food and clothing to the refugees. He suggested separate Jewish DP camps, and that 100,000 Jews be permitted to go to Palestine (Bauer 371-2). The British, who occupied Palestine, were against such a large influx, but they agreed that 1,500 Jews per month would be permitted to go (Bauer 372).

This was not enough, however, for all the Jews who wanted to emigrate from Europe. Therefore, under the organization of groups such as *Brichah*, with unofficial aid from the Polish government, 250,000 Jews were moved from Poland to surrounding countries, with the goal of getting them to the coast so they could sail to Palestine (Bauer 374-5). In the end, 200,000 East European Jews went to Palestine, with 100,000 ending up in other countries such as the United States (Bauer 375).



CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- August 15, 1925:** **Sidney Shimenovich (Simon) born in Belitze, Poland.**
- 1933:** Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany.
- 1935:** Nuremberg Laws deprive German Jews of their civil and human rights.
- 1938:** Munich Pact, September 29
- November Pogrom in Germany and Austria known as the *Kristallnacht* (Night of Broken Glass).
- 1939:**
- August 23, 1939:** German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact is signed between German representative von Ribbentrop and Soviet representative Molotov. Poland is divided into a western zone under German control and an eastern zone under Soviet control.
- 1939:** World War II begins with the Invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939 by German forces. Soviet Army invades Poland.
- The Soviet Army and German Army invade Chelm on September 28, dividing the city along the Bug River agreed upon by Nazi-Soviet Pact.
- Soviets occupied Belitze.**
- Simon, as a boy, worked at an airport cleaning asphalt off of the runways.**
- June 22, 1941:** Germans attack Soviet Union breaking the non-aggression pact.
- 1941:** Germany invades Ukraine.
- Mojshe leaves family to travel east to escape the Germans.**
- June 28, 1941:** **Simon's first experience seeing the Germans in Belitze.**
- 1941:** **Shootings in the streets and the burning of houses begins.**
- Jewish families take refuge at the Neman River while Simon's father is missing.**



Simon's father escapes mass execution. They move to grandparent's house for safety.

November 1941: Jewish citizens are forced to wear the Yellow Star of David and forcibly relocated to ghettos.

Simon and his family are forced to leave Belitze for a designated ghetto called the Zetel Ghetto.

December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbor bombed by the Japanese.

January 1942: Wannsee Conference meets to discuss the "Final Solution."

April 1942: Germans discuss plans of liquidating the ghetto and making the area *Judenrein* (Jew-free).

**** Leader of the Judenrat, Dvoretzki, tries to form a resistance group after hearing news of liquidating the ghetto. He is tortured and eventually murdered in prison.**

Simon and his family escape the Zetel Ghetto and go into hiding in a small stable.

April 28, 1942: Liquidation of the Zetel Ghetto.

Simon's father witnesses the death of their relatives captured hiding inside a small home. They witness the deaths of their uncle, aunt, and small cousin by execution.

June 1942: Mass murder by gassing at Auschwitz-Birkenau begins.

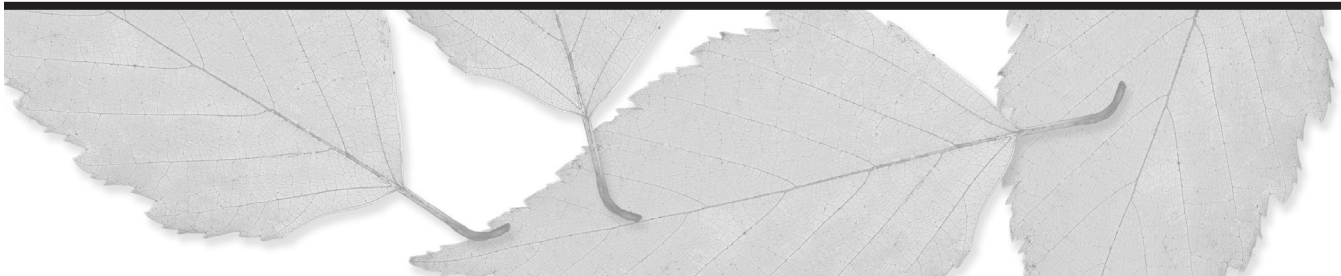
August 6, 1942: Remaining Jews of the Zetel Ghetto are killed in a large massacre.

Simon and his family flee, hiding in the woods.

Simon experiences severe frostbite.

Partisans inhabit the woods and ask Simon to join them.

While fighting with the partisans, Simon takes on several assignments, one in particular is the destruction of the wooden bridge over the Neman River that was important for the connection to other cities. By destroying this bridge, the partisans disrupted the enemy's lines of communication. He also partook in a raid on nine Polish and White Russian policeman—collaborators. He learns of his



brother's death and seeks revenge for his family.

1942-1943:

Soviets defeat the Germans in the Battle of Stalingrad in Russia in February 1943.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising begins in April 1943 and ends May 1943.

Battle of Kursk begins July 5 and last German offensive against the Soviet Army and the largest tank battle in history. Soviets defeat the Germans.

Simon's involvement in the partisans ends.

1943:

Simon returns to Belitze and is recruited by the Istrabitsky Battalion.

1944:

D-Day invasion at Normandy, June 6..

Soviets liberate the first concentration camp at Majdanek.

Ukraine liberated by the Soviets.

Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes, region primarily in Belgium.

July 1944:

Simon kills an unarmed German in revenge for his killed family

Members, especially Mojshe. He also shoots eight German soldiers.

Belitze, Belarus is fully liberated.

Simon leaves the First Battalion and returns to his family.

Simon joins the Red Army and is awarded a *Komsomol* Pin.

1945:

Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp liberated by the Soviets in January.

Nuremberg War Crimes Trials begin November.

May 8, 1945:

War is over. V-E Day: European Victory—May 8, 1945.

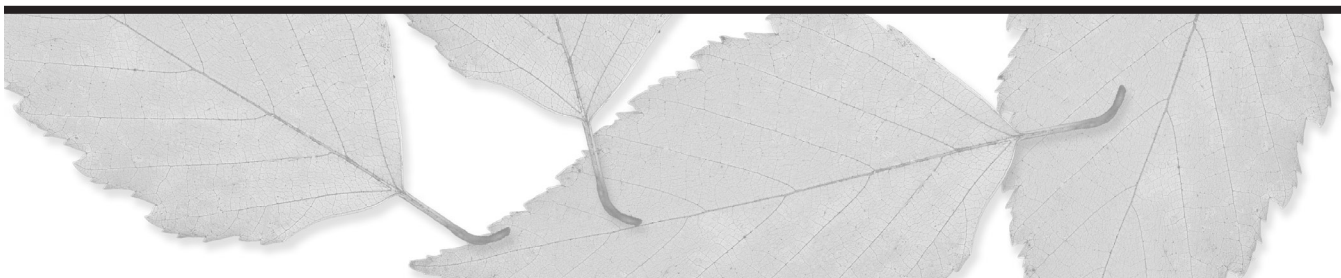
Simon reunites with his family and heads from Lodz, Poland, to Vienna where he travels to a DP camp.





Sidney Simon's Journey in Europe

- | | |
|---|--|
| A | Bielsko-Biala, Poland |
| B | Dziatlava, Hrodna Province, Belarus |
| C | Naliboki, Minsk Province, Belarus |
| D | Neman River |
| E | Michalovce, Slovakia |
| F | Lipichanka Gostinica Rup Djatlovskoe ZHKH, |
| G | Belarus |
| H | Lida, Hrodna Province, Belarus |
| I | Vilna, R. Buivydo imone, Kaunas, Lithuania |
| J | Lodz, Poland |
| K | Steyr, Austria |
| L | Upper Austria, Austria |
| M | Linz, Austria |
| N | Bremerhaven, Germany |



1946:

Sidney and his family live in a number of DP camps:

Munichholdz DP camp near Steyr, Austria, Braunau DP Camp in Austria, and Ebelsberg DP Camp, Austria.

Sidney takes Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT)

Courses: Judo mechanics, welding, camp policeman training, chauffeur, driving.

Becomes president of the ORT classes.

March 26, 1949:

Simon and his family journey from Bremerhaven, Germany, to the United States on the USS *Marine Flasher*.



Sidney's Journey in the United States

A: Boston, MA to New York, NY

B: New York, NY to Baltimore, MD

C: Baltimore, MD to Pleasantville, NJ

D: Pleasantville, NJ to Atlantic City, NJ

E and F: Atlantic City, NJ to Margate, NJ

April 13, 1949: On Passover, the family arrives in Boston then travels to Baltimore, Maryland.

First Job: Factory worker making Sweetheart Cups

Second Job: Ice Cream Cone Maker

Third Job: Concrete and Gravel

Forth Job: Plumber's Helper

Fifth Job: United Iron and Metal Company

Attended evening school on Smallwood Avenue in Baltimore to learn English.

Meets his future wife, Rosalie.

June 1, 1952: Marries Rosalie and starts his Scrap Metal business.

1953: First son, Majshe (Mitchell), born. They move to NJ to be near the sea air, to help alleviate Mitchell's medical condition, eczema.

1954: Simon and his family move to a chicken farm.

September 1956: Second child, Ruthie, born.

1958: Rented first home in Pleasantville.

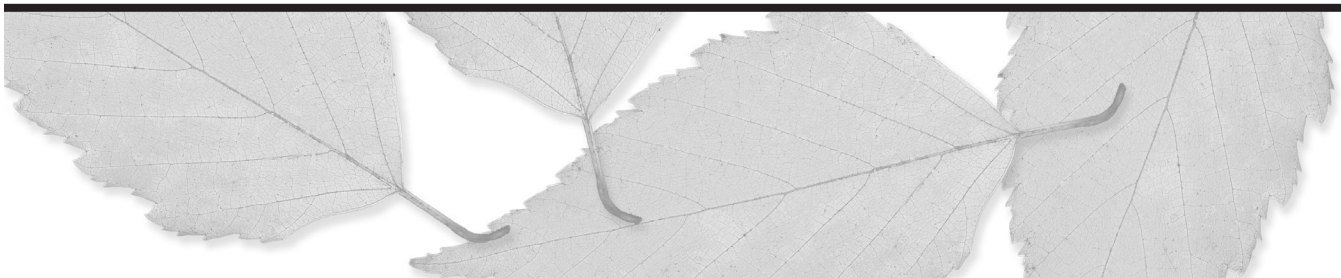
1962: Move permanently to Margate. Rent homes until build their own home.

1967: Third child, William, is born.

1980: Simon and Rosalie along with other family members return to Belitze for the first time after the war.

July 1999: Second visit to Belitze with immediate family to Belitze.

2009: *The Partisan's Revenge* published.



ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why should we remember the Holocaust? What was its purpose? What could happen if we forget?
- What are some ways that individuals and societies can remember and memorialize difficult histories?
- After the Holocaust, the international community said “Never again.” As individuals, groups, and nations, what can be done to prevent genocidal events from happening?
- Why is the study of the Holocaust relevant today?
- How was it possible for a modern society to carry out the systematic murder of a people for no reason other than that they were Jews?
- What can the Holocaust tell us about human nature?
- What are other examples of people’s inhumanity to others?
- Give some examples from Holocaust memoirs you have read of how people were able to survive the Holocaust?



CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

These are suggested activities. Vary according to grade and skill level.

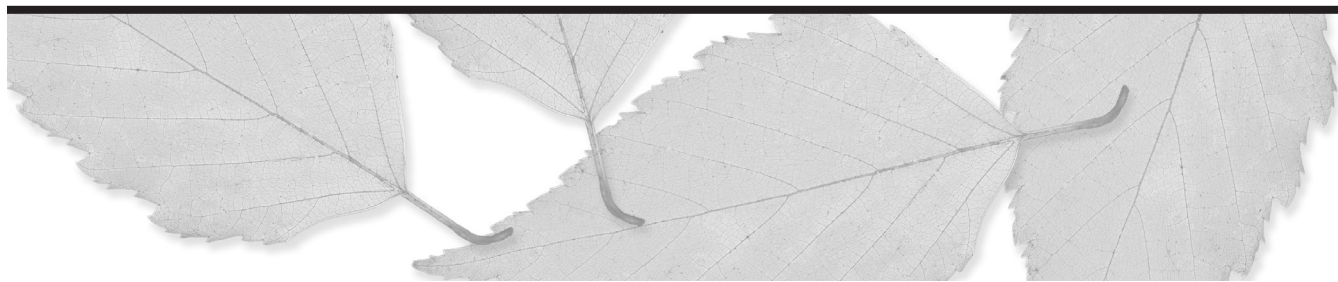
Pre-reading Classroom Activities:

1. Hand out KWL Chart on page 32 and fill out first two boxes.
2. What is the difference between a memoir, a biography, an autobiography, and a novel?
3. In the beginning of the book there is a short poem. Read the poem and ask the class which words they do not know. Define the words and discuss their meanings.

*After Treblinka
And the spezialkommando
Who tore a child with bare hands
Before its mother in Warsaw
We see differently.*

—“How We See,” Edward Bond

4. Look up “German-Soviet Pact” in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* online at the ushmm.org website, under additional resources A-Z. Read the article, noting the dates and people involved. Summarize, and in groups of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
5. Look up “Armed Jewish Resistance: Partisans” in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* online at the ushmm.org website, under additional resources A-Z. Read the article, noting the dates and people involved. Summarize, and in groups of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
6. Look up “Antisemitism” in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* online at the ushmm.org website, under additional resources A-Z. Read the article, noting the dates and people involved. Summarize, and in a group of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
7. Look up “Lithuania” in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* online at the ushmm.org website, under additional resources A-Z. Read the article, noting the dates and people involved. Summarize, and in a group of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
8. Look up “*Einsatzgruppen* (Mobile Killing Units)” in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* online at the ushmm.org website, under additional resources A-Z. Read the article, noting the dates and people involved. Summarize and in a group of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
9. Look up “Zetel Ghetto” online at www.ushmm.org. Read the article and take notes on the important dates and people listed.



10. Look up “Children in the Ghetto” online at yadvashem.org. The website is <http://ghetto.galim.org.il/eng/> Click on the captions and read the different categories of what life was like in the ghettos for children. Summarize and in a group of 3 or 4, compare your summaries.
11. Look at the maps. Note Simon’s childhood journey after he was forced out of his hometown in Belitze.
12. How did Simon survive? What was life like for Simon while hiding? In groups of 3 or 4, discuss.
13. Make a list of the words you did not know. Are these words explained for you in the Glossary? If not, look them up. In groups of 3 or 4, discuss the vocabulary words that you looked up.

Reading Activities:

1. List the people whom Simon mentions in the memoir; then describe them. In your class, discuss what makes a good description.
2. How is the book organized? Explain. Class discussion.
3. Why is the book titled *A Partisan’s Revenge*? Explain. Class discussion.
4. Make a timeline from the beginning of Simon’s life to the end. Include the important events in Simon’s life and the struggles he encountered while surviving. In a group of 3 or 4, compare timelines.
5. Discuss the significance of family to Simon. Was Major Dostavalov a significant individual enough in Sidney’s life to be considered family? Class discussion.
6. Why do you think Simon hardly mention his other siblings? Do you feel it could be a cultural decision or personal?
7. Describe two of your favorite photographs in the book. Do you have a favorite photograph in your family album? Describe it. Why is it your favorite? Is it like any of the photographs in Sidney Simon’s book?
8. List your most uncomfortable parts of the book (choose just one or two parts). Discuss. Have them write an essay about these.
9. What was Simon’s childhood like? How did he feel in school? Who were his friends? Have you read any other books where the main characters’ childhoods significantly affected their adult lives?
10. Were there any examples of resistance in the memoir? What were the obstacles to resistance?
11. What were the risks taken by strangers who gave food and /or shelter to Simon and his family?

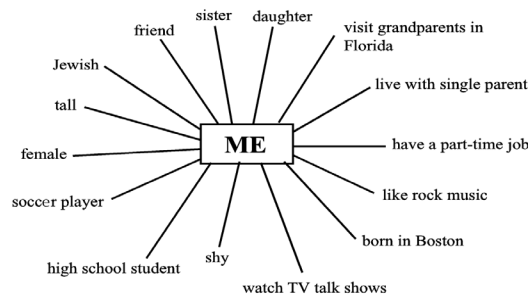


12. Have any of your family members visited Europe or another country? Were they visiting homelands or just vacationing? Describe their experiences.
13. Simon wrote about being “picked-on” in school because he was a Jewish student and his culture and religion were different from the other students. Have you ever personally felt your were being picked-on? If so, how did you feel? What do you do when there is a new student in your class? Does your school have a welcome program for new students?
14. What is one lesson that you learned from this memoir?
15. Some psychologists have said that children have to be taught to hate. Do you agree? Explain. How does the issue of hate relate to the memoir?
16. Think about the moment in the woods when Simon had frostbite. Should they have stayed in the woods, or should they have returned to the ghetto? Explain.
17. What about the issue of luck? Many scholars say that all Holocaust survivors live because of a bit of luck they had. Does Simon and his family have any luck that contributes to their survival?
18. What about the issue of antisemitism? When did antisemitism begin? Was there antisemitism in Poland before the Nazis invaded? Are there other examples of antisemitism in the memoir?
19. Sidney Simon said, “After I married and found out what my wife, who was only twelve years old, went through at the concentration camps, and after I heard about the things that happened to other people. I am very proud I did what I DID. I am only sorry I did not do more. Saying this, however, does not mean that I do not have scars.” What does he mean?
20. Many who study about the Holocaust state that Holocaust survivors are resilient. What is the definition of *resilient*? How does the life story of Sidney Simon represent the word *resilient*?

Post-reading Classroom Activities:

1. Refer to KWL chart again. Have the students fill out the last box. Discuss with the class the KWL chart.
2. Using the chart below, prepare an identity chart **for yourself**. Consider all the factors—family, school, hobbies, nationality, ethnicity, religion, etc.—that influence how you think about yourself and make decisions.





Sample Chart

3. Prepare an identity chart **Sidney Simon**. Make sure to include influences before, during, and after World War II and the Holocaust (Shoah). Discuss in your group.
4. On the computer, write a letter to Sidney Simon, commenting on his memoir and/or asking him questions. Spell check your letter and proof read.
5. Have a “Sidney Simon” day in your school. Teach the other classes at your grade level about Mr. Simon, his childhood in Poland, his life in the DP Camps, and immigration to the U.S, as well as his jobs in the U.S. Make posters and/or power points to educate the other grades. Invite Sidney Simon to an assembly for all the students in your grade.
6. As a reflection activity, create a memorial to Sidney’s family. Or to the Jews of Poland.
7. Reflect on the following quote by Elie Wiesel: “Just as memory preserves the past, so does it ensure the future, and our dedication is to both.”

For Further Reflection:

1. According to the scholar Samantha Power, an *upstander* is an individual who takes risks to help others in danger and does not hesitate to criticize those who fail to help others in need or danger. Describe the upstanders in *A Partisan’s Revenge*? Do you know any upstanders? Were you ever an upstander? Describe and discuss.
2. What is the opposite of an upstander? Are there any bystanders in the book? Have you ever been a bystander? Describe and discuss.
3. Nazi power repeatedly forced defenseless people to make what Holocaust scholar Lawrence L. Langer calls “choiceless choices.” Such choices, Langer says, do not “reflect options between life and death, but between one form of ‘abnormal’ response and another, both imposed by a situation that was in no way of the victim’s own choosing.” One example of a choiceless choice would be the following:



During a roundup in the ghetto, a family is hiding with a group in a bunker. They have a baby. Should they risk the baby crying which would mean the whole group would be discovered and deported? Or should they smother the baby to insure that the baby does not cry and give away the group's hiding place? What were the choiceless choices described in the memoir?

4. Have any historical events intersected with and influenced your life. Explain.
5. Discuss how silence and indifference to the human and civil rights of the Jews helped the perpetrators. Have a spokesperson report your findings to the class.
6. What are the obligations of responsible citizens in a democratic society? List these obligations, discuss them in your group, and then have a class discussion, listing answers on the board.
7. Read the Declaration of Human Rights online. Are you surprised at any of the "rights"? http://www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/hrphotos/declaration%20_eng.pdf
8. Read the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide online. <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>
9. Discuss some recent genocides, such as Rwanda, Bosnia, and the Congo. Why are they considered genocides? Or are they? Discuss.

Additional Questions and Activities:

1. Why is it important to remember and reflect on historical events such as the Holocaust and other genocides?
2. Why is it important to have multiple sources of evidence such as witness testimonies, diaries, official reports, newspaper articles, etc? How do we judge the reliability of sources?
3. Why is the use of imagery, photographs, and video footage important? What is the impact of such depictions?
4. What is the difference between a victim and a survivor?
5. Why do survivors feel the need to be believed?
6. What should be our responsibility in the face of atrocity? Do we have a responsibility?
7. What questions would you like to ask a Holocaust survivor? What questions would you like to ask a former German SS?
8. Use the internet and other reliable sources to answer questions that students would like to know more about in relation to the essential question and report to class.



9. Create artwork or creative writing piece that demonstrates knowledge of Sidney Simon's memoir.
10. Respond to visuals including film, photographs, primary source documents, and survivor accounts by following guided assignment.
11. Respond to selected readings by scholars and survivors of the Holocaust through guided questions, discussions, and journal reflections.
12. Can civilians be protected in war? Where is the line when civilian suffering moves from "casualties of war" to "international crimes against humanity"?
13. Have you ever experienced conflicting responsibilities or duties, for example, to your friend and to parents, or to your friend and religious teachings?
14. Using current news articles, research the current position of the German government on their treatment of Holocaust survivors.
15. Use a blank map of Europe and mark the locations of death camps. Where were the death camps? Why?
16. Understand the motivations of rescuers.
17. Discuss the characteristics of rescuers.
18. Explain the phrase the "Power of One." Or explain "One person can make a difference."
19. Understand the long term effects of the Holocaust on survivors.
20. Understand that learning about the sufferings of individuals and groups far from our own families and societies helps us to humanize "the other" and contribute to the possibilities of peace.
21. Exercise: Take a position on one side or the other. Defend your position.
 - Life is a constant struggle: those not powerful enough to rise to the top deserve whatever they get.
 - People find it easier to do evil than to do good.
 - Most people are likely to conform rather than act on their own individual values.
 - Most people would prefer to rely on miracles than to depend on the fruits of their own labor.
 - Most people need something to worship.
 - Most people avoid the truth if it is painful.
 - War is the natural outgrowth of human nature.
 - Most people need authority to tell them what to do.
22. What is a hero? What qualities do heroes have? Think of people you think of as heroes and explain



why you feel the way you do. These people can be personal heroes in your life, heroes you have seen in movies, or read about in books. Get into groups of four. Each group member should pick a hero and defend his/her choice.

23. How is it that “ordinary people” are capable of extraordinary actions, whether they are extraordinarily good or bad? What circumstances allow for this?
24. What are the risks of being a hero? Are they worth it?
25. No one likes to be different. It is difficult to stand up to your peers and disagree with them. Think of a time in your life when you stood up for what you believed—even in the face of ridicule from your peers. Describe the situation either in writing or with 2-3 others in a group.
26. One man/woman can make a difference. In America today, people sometimes feel like they can’t make a difference. Everything is so big, powerful, and difficult to change. But it can be done. Think of situations in your own life or lives of your family or friends where one person’s help has made a difference. Share, or write about this experience.
27. In the 1930s many Americans feared that immigrants would compete for scarce jobs. What was the economic situation in the U.S. in the 1930s? Can you understand why Americans might have had an anti-immigration attitude? What is the economic situation today? How do Americans feel about immigrants today? Compare and discuss.
28. Define what the term *responsibility* means to you. Now list ten responsibilities you have.



KWL CHART

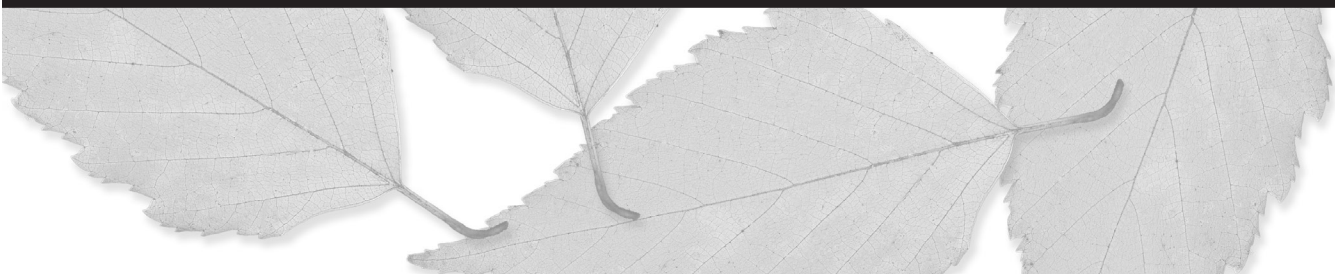
Name: _____

Date: _____

Before reading, list information in the first two columns. Once reading is done, complete the final column.

Topic: _____

What I Know	What I Want to Know	What I Have Learned

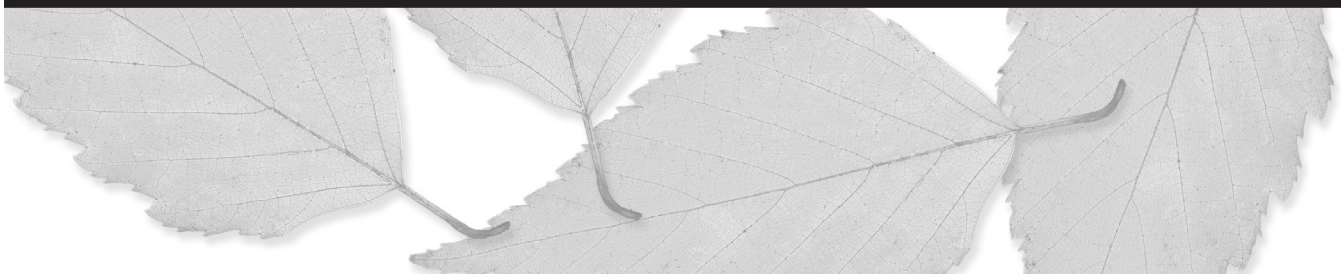


NEW JERSEY CONTENT STANDARDS

LINK TO CONTENT STANDARDS:

(See below for the common core standards for Writing, Reading, Language, and Speaking and Listening in Social Studies)

- Standard 3.1:** All students will understand and apply the knowledge of sounds, letters, and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension.
- Standard 3.2:** All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.
- Standard 6.1:** All students will utilize historical thinking, problem solving, and research skills to maximize their understanding of civics, history, geography, and economics.
- Standard 6.1.12.A.11.e** Assess the responses of the United States and other nations to the violation of human rights that occurred during the Holocaust and other genocides.
- Standard 6.2.12.B.4.b** Determine how geography impacted military strategies and major turning points during World War II.
- Standard 6.2.12.D.4.j** Analyze how the social, economic, and political roles of women were transformed during this time period.
- Standard 6.1.12.B.11.a** Explain the role that geography played in the development of military strategies and weaponry in World War II.
- Standard 6.1.12.D.11.a** Analyze the roles of various alliances among nations and their leaders in the conduct and outcomes of the World War II.
- Standard 6.1.12.D.11.b** Compare and contrast different perspectives about how the United States should respond to aggressive policies and actions taken by other nations at this time.
- Standard 6.1.12.D.11.e** Explain how World War II and the Holocaust led to the creation of international organizations (i.e., the United Nations) to protect human rights, and describe the subsequent impact of these organizations.
- Standard 6.2:** All students will know, understand and appreciate the value and principles of American democracy and the 'rights, responsibilities, and roles of a citizen in the nation and the world.
- Standard 6.2:7:** All students will participate in events to acquire understanding of complex global problems.

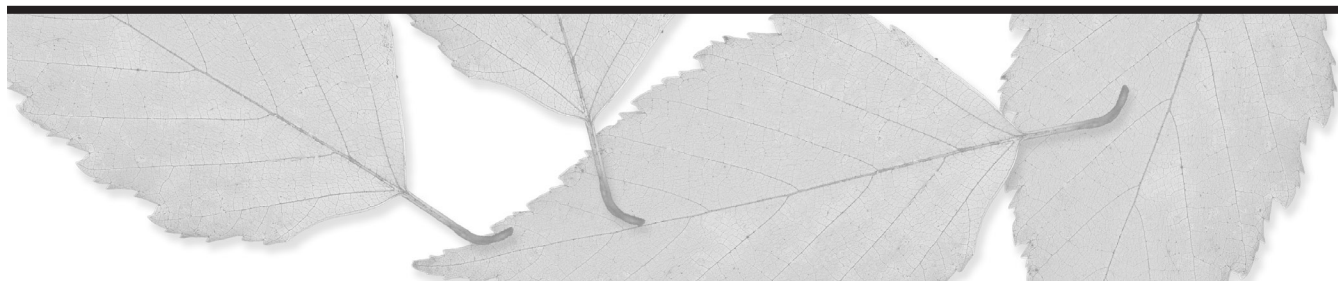


Standard 6.2:11:	All students will participate in activities that foster understanding and appreciation for diverse cultures.
Standard 6.2.12.A.4.c	Analyze the motivations, causes, and consequences of the genocides of Armenians, Roma (gypsies), and Jews, as well as the mass exterminations of Ukrainians and Chinese.
Standard 6.2.12.A.5.e	Assess the progress of human and civil rights around the world since the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.
Standard 6.2.12.C.4.c	Assess the short- and long-term demographic, social, economic, and environmental consequences of the violence and destruction of the two World Wars.
Standard 6.2.12.D.4.i	Compare and contrast the actions of individuals as perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers during events of persecution or genocide, and describe the long-term consequences of genocide for all involved.
Standard 6.2:14	All students will connect the concept of universal human rights to world events and issues.
Standard 6.2:15	All students will compare and contrast current and past genocidal acts and other acts of hatred and violence for the purposes of subjugation and exploitation and discuss present and future actions by individuals and governments to prevent the reoccurrence of such events.
Standard 6.3. 4.A.4	Communicate with students from various countries about common issues of public concern and possible solutions.
Standard 6.3. 4.D.1	Identify actions that are unfair or discriminatory, such as bullying, and propose solutions to address such actions.
Standard 8.1.8.E.1	Gather and analyze findings using data collection technology to produce a possible solution for a content-related or real-world problem.
Standard 8.2.8.C.2	Compare and contrast current and past incidences of ethical and unethical use of labor in the United States or another country and present results in a media-rich presentation.



WRITING STANDARDS 9-12

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.



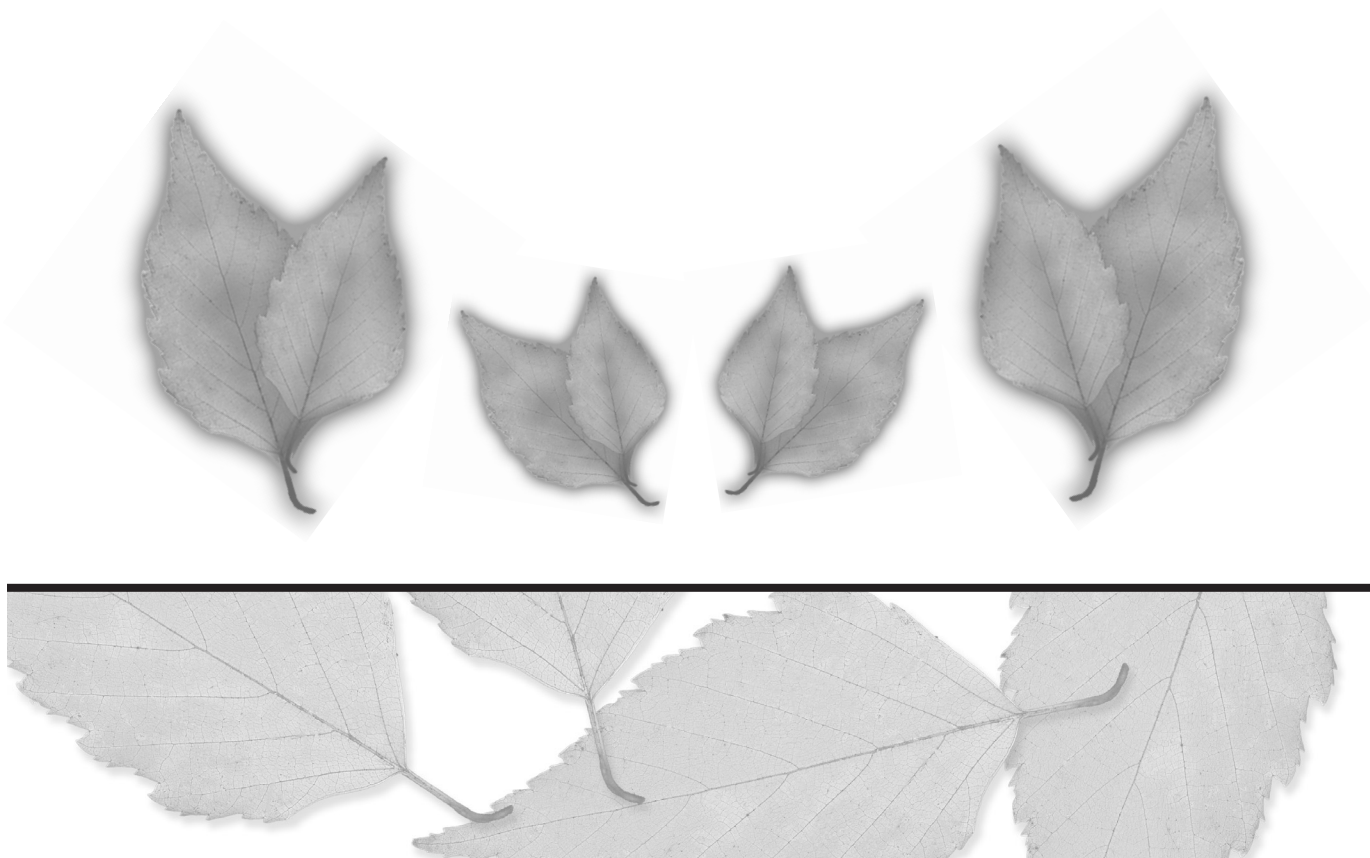
READING STANDARDS 9-12

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Determine two or more central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper); analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
- Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.



SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS 9–12

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9-10 & 11-12 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)



LANGUAGE STANDARDS 9–12

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9–10 reading and content and grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Aktion: German actions; term used for targeted round up of Jews.

Antisemitism: Hatred of Jews. Antisemitism goes back to the earliest centuries of Christianity, and since that time, there have been legal, social, political, and economic restrictions on Jews throughout the centuries. In the 19th century, Wilhelm Marr coined the word to describe a racial hatred of Jews.

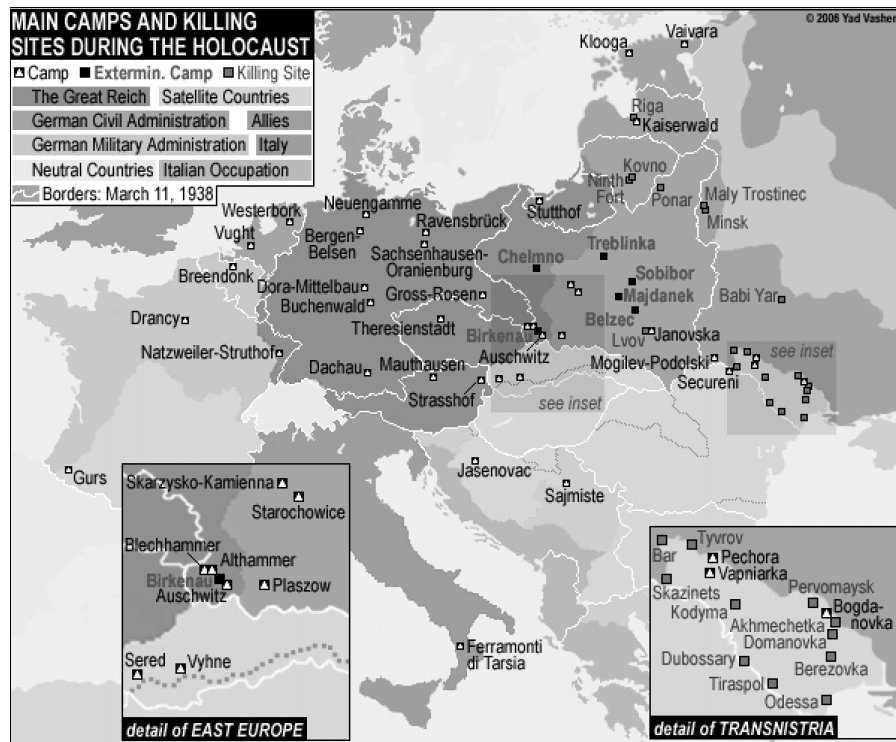
Auschwitz-Birkenau: The largest Nazi extermination and concentration camp, located in the Polish town of Oswiecim, 37 miles west of Krakow. One-sixth of all Jews murdered by the Nazis were gassed at Auschwitz. (Yad Vashem)

Battle of Stalingrad: Major battle fought between the Nazis and Soviets from July 17, 1942 to February 2, 1943, ending with a Soviet victory. This was a critical turning point in the war against the Nazis.

Bystanders: Refers to cases where individuals do not offer any means of help in an emergency situation to the victim. During the Holocaust, bystanders were ordinary people who played it safe. As private citizens, they complied with the laws and tried to avoid the terrorizing activities of the Nazi regime. They wanted to get on with their daily lives. During the war, the collective world's response toward the murder of millions of people was minimal. Bystanders may have remained unaware, or perhaps were aware of victimization going on around them, but, being fearful of the consequences, chose not to take risks to help Nazi victims. Compare to upstanders.

Concentration Camps: An essential part of the Nazis systematic oppression and mass murder of Jews, political adversaries, and others considered socially and racially undesirable. There were concentration camps, forced labor camps, death camps, transit camps, and prisoners of war (POWs) camps. The living conditions in all the camps were brutal. The Nazis goal was to murder the Jews and others through gassing or working them to death.





*Main Camps and Killing Sites
ushmm.org*

Death Camps: Six death camps were constructed in Poland. These were Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, Lublin and Chelmno. “The primary purpose of these camps was the methodical killing of millions of innocent people. The first, Chelmno, began operating in late 1941. The others began their operations in 1942.” (fcit.usf.edu)

Displaced Persons Camp (DP camp): A temporary facility for displaced persons coerced into forced migration. The term is mainly used for camps established after WWII primarily for refugees from Eastern Europe and for the former inmates of the Nazi German concentration camps.

Einsatzgruppen: Mobile killing squads responsible for the massacres of 2 million civilians across Eastern Poland and the Soviet Union.

Eichmann, Adolf: The man in charge of the Final Solution (total annihilation) to kill the Jews of Europe. SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Adolf Eichmann (1906-1962) was head of the Department for Jewish Affairs in the Gestapo from 1941 to 1945 and was chief of operations in the deportation of three million Jews to death camps. After the war, Eichmann fled to Argentina, living under an assumed name for ten years until Israeli Mossad agents abducted him in 1960 to stand trial in Jerusalem. The controversial trial lasted from April 2 to August 14, 1961. Eichmann was sentenced to death and executed on May 31, 1962.

Holocaust: (1933-1945) Literally, consumed by fire. The Holocaust began in 1933 when Hitler became the Chancellor of Germany and ended when WWII ended in Europe in 1945. During these years approximately 6 million Jews were murdered, including one and half million children. In addition, during the Holocaust, 5 million others were murdered—handicapped, Gypsies, Homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Masons, and Communists among others.

Istrabitsky Battalion: Established by the Soviet military to keep order in the occupied territories, including Belitze.

Judenrat: The ruling Jewish council of a ghetto, appointed by Nazi officials. They were usually forced to create lists of Jews who were to be deported.

Kaddish: The Kaddish is a prayer that praises God and expresses a yearning for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. The emotional reactions inspired by the Kaddish come from the circumstances in which it is said: it is recited at funerals and by mourners, and sons are required to say Kaddish for eleven months after the death of a parent. (jewish virtual library)

Komosol Member Pin: youth wing of the Communist Party pin playing an important role as a mechanism for teaching the values of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in the young, and as an organ for introducing the young to the political domain. Along with these purposes, the organization served as a highly mobile pool of labor and political activism, with the ability to move to areas of high-priority as short notice. Active members received privileges and preferences in promotion.

Kristallnacht: or the November Pogrom, also called the Night of Broken Glass, a Nazi term that downplayed the seriousness of the destruction. Kristallnacht occurred on November 9 and 10, 1938, and resulted in the destruction of German Jewish synagogues and businesses, as well as mass arrests of innocent Jewish men.

"The Master Race": represented the "race" that would rule the European population of the future—consisting ideally of blue-eyed, blonde, pure "Aryans." A part of Hitler's master plan. As we know now, there is only the human race.

Mischlinge: As defined by the Nuremberg laws in 1935, a Jew was somebody who had at least three Jewish grandparents—regardless of religious affiliation or self-identification. The latter did matter for people with two Jewish grandparents: if they belonged to the Jewish religion or were married to Jews, they were classified as Jewish; if neither, they were considered *Mischlinge* of the first degree. On October 27, 1942, a conference regarding *Mischlinge* was convened. It was here decided that the *Mischlinge* of the first degree



would be sterilized, but the *Mischlinge* of the second degree (the ones with one Jewish grandparent) “without exception, were to be treated as Germans, but they too were in remain subject to *Mischlinge* restrictions.”

Neman River: A major European river rising in Belarus and flowing through Lithuania before draining into the Baltic Sea near Klapedia. It is the 14th largest river in Europe.

Nuremburg Laws: Race and marriage laws, enacted in 1935, enabled the Nazis to dehumanize and ultimately destroy the European Jewish population under their domination. These laws defined who was a Jew and stripped Jews of their civil rights.

N.K.V.D.: The *Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del* (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) was a government agency that handled a number of the Soviet Union’s affairs of state. The NKVD was best known as the secret agency of the Soviet Union - now KGB.

Paratroopers: Soldiers who are trained to parachute and operate as part of an airborne force.

Partisan: Jews who managed to escape from ghettos and camps formed their own fighting units. These fighters, or partisans, were concentrated in densely wooded areas.

Propaganda: A form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position.

Shoah: The Hebrew word meaning “catastrophe,” denoting the catastrophic destruction of European Jewry during World War II. The term is used in Isreal, and the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) has designated an official day, called Yom ha-Shoah, as a day of commemorating the Shoah or Holocaust. Now is the preferred term for the historical period, 1933-1945.

Soviet-German Pact: A non-aggression agreement between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany; this pact was later broken by Hitler when he invaded the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941.

Upstander: A term coined by Samantha Power in her book, *A Problem from Hell: American and the Age of Genocide*. An upstander is a person who stands up for innocent victims of abuse or persecution. An upstander who actually saves someone’s life becomes a rescuer.

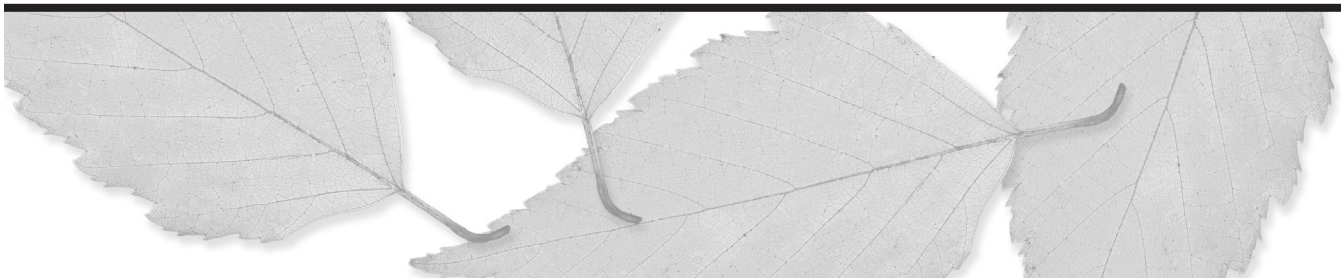
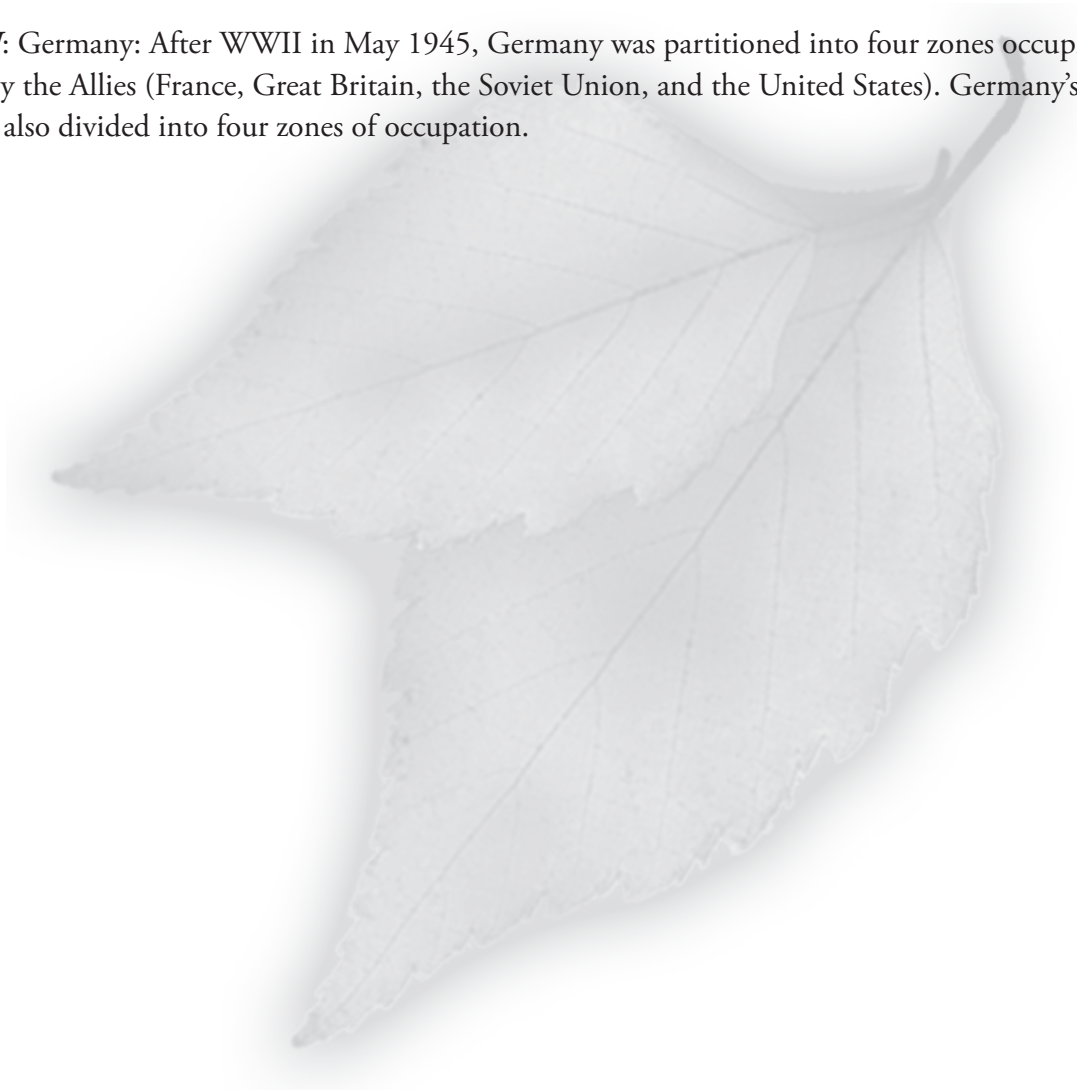


Vilna: July 1944 the Polish Home Army – Vilna Uprising – and then the Red Army seized Vilnius, which was shortly afterwards incorporated into the Soviet Union and made the capital of the newly created Lithuanian SSR.

World War I: 1914-1918. WWI began with the June 28, 1914, assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by a Serbian nationalist. The United States entered WWI in April 1917 because of Germany's usage of unrestricted submarine warfare. WWI ended on November 11, 1918.

World War II: 1939-1945. In Europe WWII began with the invasion of Poland in September 1939. The United States entered WWII after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. World War II ended in Europe in May 1945 and in the Pacific in August 1945.

Zones, Post WWII: Germany: After WWII in May 1945, Germany was partitioned into four zones occupied and administered by the Allies (France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States). Germany's capital, Berlin, was also divided into four zones of occupation.



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United States. Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Department of State. *U.S. Department of State*. By Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. U.S. Department of State, 27 Jan. 2012. Web. 7 July 2012. <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5371.htm>>.

"Zhetel or Town." *ZHETEL 1428-1942*. Web. 7 July 2012. <<http://www.zhetel.org/english#partisanshttp://>>>.

SUGGESTED GENERAL WEBSITES

<http://fcit.usf.edu/holocaust.htm>

<http://ghetto.galim.org.il/eng/>

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

<http://www.state.gov>

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

<http://www.yadvashem.org>

SUGGESTED VIDEOS/DVDs

Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State

The Auschwitz Volunteer: Beyond Bravery

Holocaust: The Liberation of Auschwitz

Survivors of the Holocaust

