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This resource pack has been produced by the Institute of Education at the University of Winchester (UK), thanks to generous funding through an Educational Grant from the Association of Jewish Refugees.

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acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) for their generous support in the creation of this resource through their Educational Grants programme. Particular thanks to Alex Maws, Head of Educational Grants & Heritage at the AJR for his continued support and guidance throughout.

Thanks also to Martin Winstone at the Holocaust Educational Trust for his helpful feedback on the draft resource.

Special thanks also to all of the young people and educators who have shared their experiences with the author during visits to Holocaust-related sites over many years.

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To reference this resource:

Richardson, A. (2025). Supporting young people during visits to Holocaust-related sites - a research-informed resource pack for educators and group leaders. Educational Resource Pack, University of Winchester, UK.

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About this resource pack...

Who is this resource pack for?

This resource pack is for anyone preparing to take a group of young people to visit Holocaust-related sites. You might be a teacher, youth worker, community or religious leader, or a volunteer accompanying a visit. Whoever you are, we hope that this resource helps you to plan for a successful visit - and that the activities that follow help you to support the young people accompanying you.

Why should you use these resources?

Holocaust sites are emotionally challenging places. They are complex spaces in which:

- history happened
- history is retold
- history is remembered.

These are places where genocide happened or is commemorated, and for most young people this will be their first encounter with such a place. So it is important that accompanying adults consider how they can emotionally support the young people in their care (and each other) during their visit.

The resources in this pack are designed to help you to do this before, during, and after your visit to the Holocaust-related sites. They are intended to be used as 'off the shelf' resources to help you initiate and continue discussions that will help young people better manage their emotions, and better understand their learning at the site(s). Young people can struggle to articulate how they are feeling when they encounter Holocaust-related sites. These resources are designed to 'get them talking' - to begin conversations with you that will help them better understand their reactions to the sites, and to be better able to articulate their thoughts.



Throughout this resource pack the **Key Questions** it addresses are marked by this symbol

How should you use these resources?

This resource is presented in seven sections:

- ▶ **Section 1** will help you to think about different types of sites, how you are framing your visit, safeguarding issues, best practice in learning and teaching about the Holocaust and site-based education. You will think about the centrality of testimony, the need to build in time for reflection and memorialisation, and the particular responses of religious or faith groups. You will also reflect on Holocaust-related sites as complex, contested spaces of memory, and think about how to respond to your young people's additional needs, as well as the needs of the other adults supporting them in your group. There is also a chance to consider how we visit Holocaust-related sites during times of international conflict or unrest.
- ▶ **Sections 2-4** offer a series of activities and resources to support you and your group before, during, and after your visits to Holocaust-related sites.
- ▶ **Section 5** will help you incorporate local Holocaust-related sites into your itinerary. You will also consider virtual sites and other technologies as a means of further enhancing your group's learning, and the future of sites and site visits.
- ▶ **Section 6** shares some of the research literature that underpins this resource pack, offering various links and sources for your further reading and consideration.

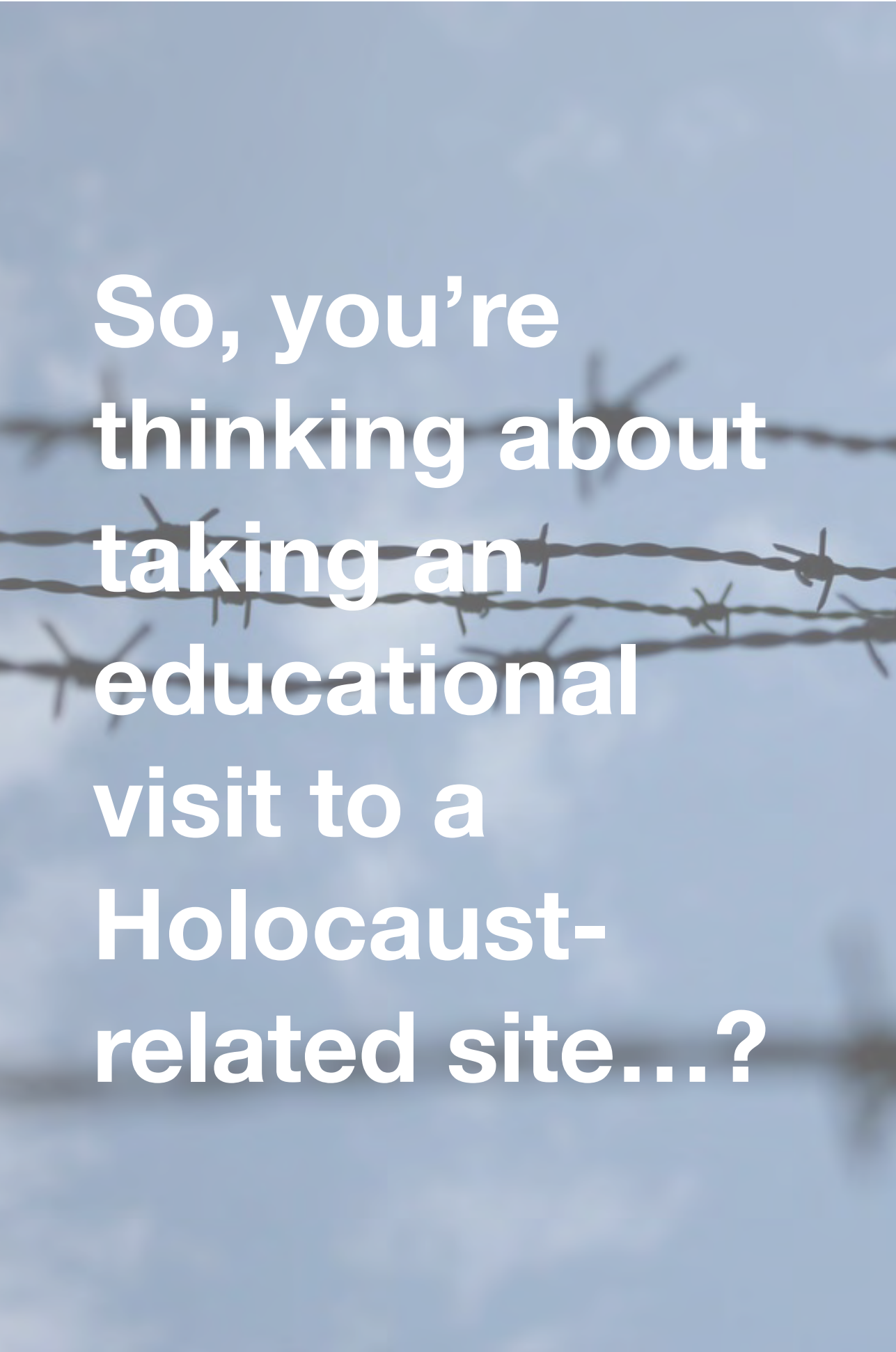
Along the way there are **key questions** to reflect on, **checklists** to support you in your planning, and spaces for you to make notes. There are also various links to other resources online (indicated by a  **pin symbol** - which hyperlink in the digital version), and an accompanying PowerPoint (included in this resource in **Section 7** and available to download from the AJR).

We hope you find this resource useful as you continue to plan for, and then lead, your visit to Holocaust-related sites...



section one

introduction



**So, you're
thinking about
taking an
educational
visit to a
Holocaust-
related site...?**

It's good to start with questions...

If you're reading this guide, you're probably already thinking about taking an educational visit to a Holocaust-related site. As you start to plan your visit, you will probably have lots of questions, including:

- who should we take?
- how much will it cost?
- where could we go?
- what can we do there?
- how long should we go for?
- what should be included on our itinerary?

The first two questions are about practicalities. The next few pages will help you think about which young people you might take on the visit, and to consider safeguarding issues around their ages and their prior learning.

Your financial constraints might dictate the answers to the remaining questions. However, it is worth spending some time thinking about **which site(s) you want to visit**. Some of the best-known sites are the most accessible and consequently most visited - such as the sites of the former Nazi concentration camps of Auschwitz Birkenau in Poland, or Dachau in Germany. These sites can be easily (and relatively cheaply) accessed by frequent flights and public transport routes. Lesser known sites might require more logistics in-country, such as private coach hire. You should also think about what to do once you are there. For example, lesser visited sites tend to have fewer facilities and educational offers. Their local towns are also likely to have fewer options to accommodate your group. So, you'll need to think about your itinerary carefully, depending on where you want to go, how long for, and with how many people.

? What is a site of the Holocaust?

There are many different types of site. Some exist where the events of the Holocaust **actually happened**. These might include the site of a former concentration camp, a former Nazi administrative building, or houses that once belonged to Jewish people before the war. Others have been created to **memorialise** the Holocaust. These might include purpose-built museums, or monuments / memorials. Sometimes a site is **both**, such as a museum built on the land of a former concentration camp.

Increasingly, many sites can be visited **virtually**. This guide considers many of the different types of sites you might visit with your group of young people. In deciding which type of site(s) to visit, perhaps the most important question should be:

? Why are you going there?

You probably have a **key educational goal** in mind - for example for your students to learn about particular aspects of Holocaust history - but there might also be social, cultural, and even recreational reasons for visiting a different place or country. It's important to think about the balance of your planned journey; **are the sites the focal points and reason for your visit, or are they being included incidentally** while you're near to them (on a sports tour, for example). Thinking about this at the initial planning stage will help you to **frame your site visit** more clearly for the young people you are accompanying.

Framing your visit will have a significant impact on how your young people anticipate and prepare for their encounter with the site(s). It will also affect how they experience them during the visit, and how they continue to make sense of them afterwards. Investing time thinking about framing should be an essential part of your planning.

On the next pages, you can reflect on the different types of sites you might visit, and how the purpose of your trip might affect how you frame your visit...



Holocaust-related sites

- thinking about different types of sites

There are many different types of Holocaust-related sites.

Here are some examples, for you to consider the learning opportunities they might offer your group...

original buildings - some will be preserved or restored, others might be in disrepair or ruin

geographical locations and spaces - these might be large regions, or very specific (small) spaces

urban sites - could include original buildings, or sites where buildings once stood

absence - Holocaust-related sites might not have much to see there now. Instead, the presence of 'absence' is what illustrates the events there

memorials - could be built at locations where the Holocaust happened, or could be further removed from those locations

educational input - some sites have displays, guides, apps, etc. Others will require you to create educational resources for your group

Thinking about framing your visit...

Visiting a Holocaust-related site will always be a valuable educational experience if it is framed and presented clearly. A rushed, unexpected, or unprepared visit to a site risks being a confusing (and potentially traumatic) experience for your young people.

By focusing on **how** you are visiting and **what** you want them to learn from the site(s), you will be able to prepare your young people for a challenging but positive educational encounter.

? How are you visiting this site(s)?

Are you travelling to the site(s) specifically, or are you taking the opportunity to visit while you are nearby?

Travelling to another country for the specific purpose of visiting Holocaust-related sites will be a different experience from visiting such sites while you are travelling for another reason. If your visit focus is on other experiences (such as a language trip to Germany, for example), then you need to think about **how** the visits to sites will be timetabled. Is there enough time to visit the sites properly, or might the visit be rushed because of other commitments? There can be a risk of reducing the site visit to little more than a 'quick stop' or a convenient way to fill an afternoon during a busy itinerary. This risks minimising the

site and its significance for your young people. However you are visiting, you need to ensure adequate time at the site(s).

? What do you want them to learn?

What are the learning objectives for your visit?

You will probably have some key learning objectives for your planned visit - such as developing your young people's knowledge of the events of the Holocaust, or the specific history of a region or former camp. It is important to think about what your overall learning objectives are for your visit, so that you can plan with them clearly in mind.

If you are visiting multiple sites - why?

How many sites are you going to visit? What are your learning objectives for **each** site? Are they different for different sites? For example, will some sites explore the experiences of victims (such as a site of deportation), while others explore perpetrator histories (such as former Nazi buildings)? Will your visit include sites of pre- or post-war Jewish life? It is often better to visit a small number of sites with a specific focus, rather than visiting multiple sites too quickly or superficially. Otherwise, you risk overwhelming the young people with multiple narratives - which could be confusing for them.

What is the group's prior learning & understanding?

You will need to think about the academic background of your young people - what background learning and knowledge will they have about the historic events? If they haven't studied history for a few years, what do they remember (and what might they have forgotten)? Do you (and the other adults accompanying the group) have sufficient subject knowledge to support them? You need to ensure the learning objectives for the visit reflect your group's prior learning and understanding.





What prior historical learning should young people have before their visit to a site?

The Holocaust is not easy to explain, and we shouldn't try to over-simplify it for young people. The story of the Holocaust is made up of millions of complex individual experiences, within a complicated historical geo-political narrative. It is important that young people have some basic background knowledge before they visit a Holocaust-related site. This will help them to situate it within the historical context.



What else should they know before they visit a site?

Before they visit a site, it is helpful that young people have some understanding of the following: the diversity of Jewish life and culture that existed across Europe before the war • the rise of National Socialism in Germany • Nazi antisemitic policies and the impact these had on Jewish communities • the roles of perpetrators and bystanders in communities across Europe • the development of the camp system • the

murder of Jews across Europe and the various methods used, culminating in the Final Solution • the Nazi persecution of other groups (such as Roma and Sinti people, homosexuals, black people, and those with disabilities) • the experiences of survivors (including those who came to the UK as refugees) • how the Holocaust is remembered and memorialised.

These are difficult topics and they need to be taught accurately by people who have the expertise to challenge the misconceptions young people might have. Your young people may have been exposed to various forms of Holocaust distortion or denial from the internet, social media, and fictitious accounts (such as popular novels, or films). You might consider holding a session before your visit to ask them 'what do you know?' - hosted by a knowledgeable speaker (such as a History teacher or Holocaust educator) to tackle any misconceptions they might have before their visit.

On the next page you can reflect on the questions raised so far...





Checklist

- ☐ What is the main reason for your visit (is it Holocaust-related, or not)?
- ☐ Is there adequate time for your site visit in the itinerary? If time is short, what are the priorities for your site visit?

- ☐ What are your learning objectives at each site?

- ☐ What prior learning do your young people have? What do you need to do to ensure they know about the history & context of the Holocaust before the visit?
- ☐ Who will be responsible for this?
- ☐ When will it be delivered?

Notes



Safeguarding: taking care of the young people on your visit

For most people a visit to a Holocaust-related site is a deeply affecting experience. You've already thought about:

- **how** your group are visiting (how you are **framing** their visit)
- what you want them to learn (the **learning objectives**)
- what they're **prior learning** might be.

A key consideration now should be **safeguarding** - in particular, how you are going to prepare them for their visit **emotionally** and how you are going to **support** them during and after their visit.

The following questions will help you consider some important safeguarding considerations while you are planning your visit. These should be thought about in addition to the statutory safeguarding requirements of your organisation.

How well do you know your group?

Young people relate to the Holocaust in many different ways and for different reasons. It is important that you know something about your group and their backgrounds so that you can appropriately support anyone who might struggle to cope with the visit, or who might find aspects of the visit particularly sensitive or challenging. For example, those who identify as Jewish or as being of Jewish heritage, those from a refugee heritage background, those who identify with groups persecuted by the Nazis and their collaborators (such as the LGBTQIA+ community), or those with a German heritage. Sometimes you will not know that they have these identities before the visit. Often these visits give young people the chance to 'open up'

about a part of their family history (or a part of themselves) that they have previously kept private. It is important that all accompanying adults have appropriate safeguarding training and are prepared to listen to and support young people in such circumstances. You need to have clear procedures in place to deal with any concerns that arise from such revelations. All staff should be familiar with your Risk Assessment for the visit and the statutory safeguarding procedures of your school / organisation. It is important that adults are emotionally available for the young people; to support and guide them through the visit. The resources in this pack have been designed to help you to do this. The key thing is that adults **listen to the young people** and their concerns. It is good practice for accompanying adults to have a short 'debrief' at the end of each day to share any pastoral concerns they might have about members of group, for example.

Are your group old enough / mature enough for this visit?

It is important to consider the age and maturity of the young people you are thinking about taking to the site(s). Are they emotionally ready to encounter the remnants of genocide, for example? Several sites suggest minimum ages for entry (for example, the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum recommends visitors should be over 14 years of age, although this is not rigidly enforced). Particular care should be taken if you are considering taking a mixed age group, where you might have to tailor age-specific activities or groupings for different parts of the visit.

There are a number of things you can do in advance of your visit to ensure the wellbeing of your whole group (including the accompanying adults).

The following questions will help you think about some of the actions you can take to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing...

Should you do a site visit before you take the group?

It is always advisable to do an in-person visit to a site in advance of taking a group. This will help you to better understand the site, and to plan your visit more effectively. If you are using a tour company they should be able to facilitate this, or to provide you with detailed information if you are unable to do a pre-visit. It is never advisable to visit a site without a pre-visit or the support of a tour company.

A pre-visit will also help you with your Risk Assessment. For example, museums at sites should be able to provide you with their own Risk Assessments of their buildings and educational activities, which you can then include in your own.

Should you engage a tour guide to guide you around the sites?

Some sites and museums offer tours by trained guides (and some insist on you using them). If you have the option, it is always a good idea to be guided by someone who knows the site and its history well.

It is important to discuss with the guide what your expectations are - what do you want to see and why? Are there any places you wish to avoid, perhaps for safeguarding reasons? Are there any places you would like to deliver educational content yourself? If possible, contact the site / museum in advance to discuss this so the guide is fully briefed beforehand.

How might safeguarding affect your itinerary?

You will need to think carefully about the programme you are planning. For example, it would be undesirable to visit an emotionally demanding site immediately after a long journey. It would be better to have some time to 'settle in' to the surroundings (such as the local town or city) before visiting the more challenging sites / museums on your itinerary.

You should also think about the balance of activities during your visit - are there opportunities for the young people to relax and have 'down time' between the more challenging parts of your itinerary? Getting this balance right can be tricky. For example, you may not wish to do something that seems trivial after a solemn visit to a site, but it might be what your young people need. You will know them best and you may need to be flexible in your itinerary so you can do whatever 'seems right' at the time. This might mean cutting a site visit short, or changing your itinerary. This is always better than risking overwhelming your young people.

Do you need to think about safeguarding the adults accompanying your group as well?

Yes. You have a responsibility to the adults accompanying your group as well as to the young people. The adults might find the sites challenging (particularly if it's their first time visiting), so make sure staff can work together flexibly in case anyone needs to take a break during the visit. It is okay for young people to see that we can be affected by the site too, just like they might be.

It is good practice to spend some time together as a group of adults before the visit to discuss the itinerary and how everyone might be feeling about the plans. This will provide an opportunity for people to articulate any worries and to prepare themselves for the various sites you will be visiting. There is a resource to help you with this, later in this pack.

When past meets present

visiting Holocaust-related sites

in times of conflict

It is impossible to visit Holocaust-related sites without acknowledging some contemporary contexts - such as global conflicts, and contemporary antisemitism.

Should you still visit Holocaust-related sites in times of conflict and unrest?

Yes. The events of the Holocaust are a matter of historical fact - they are not lessened in importance by current events. It is also important not to compare the past with the present, or compare suffering between different people in different times and places. It is vital that young people continue to engage with Holocaust-related sites.

Might current events affect how you visit the site?

It is important to be realistic about how current events might impact your visit. For example, members of your group might be more aware of the presence of security at sites, or they may feel more self-conscious visiting (particularly if they visibly identify with their personal faith - such as a Jewish boy wearing a kippah, for example). They might have their own views about current global political situations, so don't assume that everyone agrees with you about current events (and make this clear to the group themselves). Some members of your group might want to carry flags, wear badges, or make statements during your visit - you will need to discuss with them when and where (and if) this is appropriate, and how to be considerate of other visitors. It is particularly important not to do anything that might be inflammatory to those with different views - mutual respect and the safety of your group and other visitors are paramount.

What should you do if there is a security incident at the site?

You will need to plan for the very unlikely event of a security incident at the site(s) you are visiting. This should be part of your safeguarding and Risk Assessment considerations before your visit anyway. It is important to familiarise yourself with the site's own Risk Assessment (if they provide one) and to follow instructions from your guides. As general principles, in the event of an incident:

- ▶ move your group away from immediate harm to a safe place
- ▶ make sure you have everyone
- ▶ follow the instructions of your guide (if you have one)
- ▶ contact the emergency services in the case of imminent danger
- ▶ make sure you keep your emergency contacts at home informed

You should ensure you have the in-country numbers for the emergency services, British Consulate, etc. with you at all times. You should also have parental / carer contact details for all of your group with you, as well as records of any medical needs. It is also advisable to carry passports in-country (and this is a requirement in some countries, so check before you go).

Your main concern should always be for the safety and welfare of your group.

Remember: it is highly unlikely that you will experience a security incident at a site, but it is important that you plan for one as part of your safeguarding / Risk Assessment process.



Checklist

- ☐ Has everyone accompanying the visit received appropriate safeguarding training and statutory clearance?
- ☐ Have you circulated copies of the Risk Assessment to everyone (if not, when will this happen, and by whom)?
- ☐ Are all accompanying adults aware of the safeguarding procedures to follow (if not, how / when will they be acquainted with the procedures)?

- ☐ Are there any specific (foreseeable) safeguarding issues you need to consider for this group of young people?
- ☐ Do you need to make any adjustments to your programme for particular students, or for different ages?

- ☐ What will you do if a young person reveals that they are emotionally struggling in some way before / during / after the visit?
- ☐ Who is responsible for communicating with your school / organisation's safeguarding leads, if needed?

Notes



**What does
best practice
in Holocaust
education &
site-based
education
look like...?**

Learning & teaching about the Holocaust:

sources of expertise

There are a number of organisations and charities in the UK and around the world that provide expert support and guidance for teaching about the Holocaust. Most of these organisations produce resources and guidelines for learning & teaching about the Holocaust. There is a summary of 'good practice' on the next page.

You can click on any of the links below to explore the resources of some of these organisations:

📌 [The Holocaust Educational Trust](#) has a cross curricular scheme of learning called 'Exploring The Holocaust' which includes a range of lesson plans and resources for Primary and Secondary schools. They also offer professional development opportunities, visits by specialist educators, teacher study visits, the government-funded 'Lessons from Auschwitz' programme, and the Testimony 360 programme. The HET partner with the University of the West of Scotland to deliver the 📌 [Vision Schools Scotland](#) programme.

📌 [The UCL Centre for Holocaust Education](#) has extensively researched current practice in Holocaust education in the UK. Their resources include a range of research briefings, teaching resources, and professional development

opportunities. They also co-ordinate a network of Beacon schools and have produced a research-informed textbook, 'Understanding the Holocaust: How and why did it happen?'

📌 [The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust](#) co-ordinate Holocaust commemoration activities in the UK and produce a range of educational resources based on the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day each year.

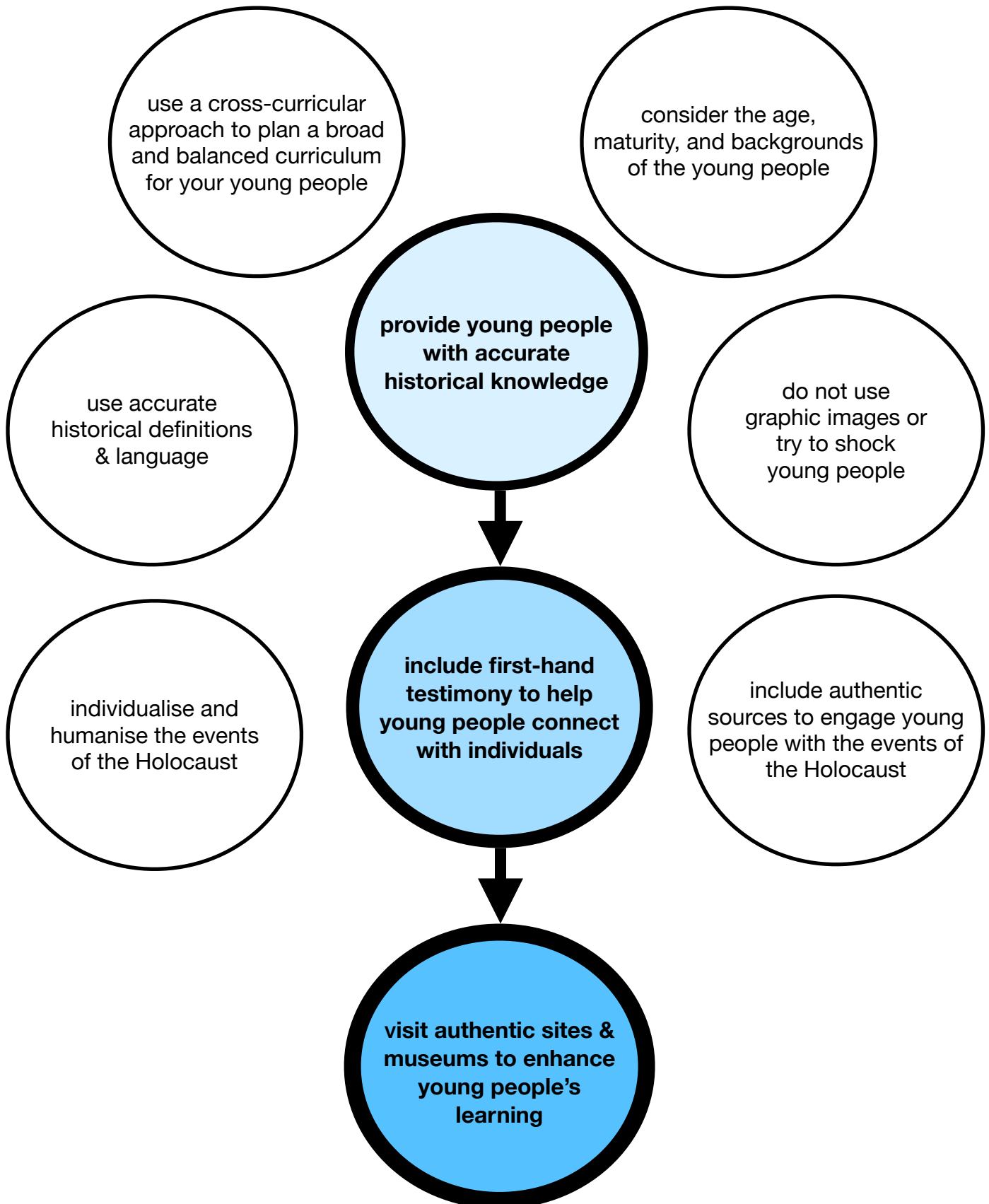
Other resources can be found on the websites of 📌 [The National Holocaust Centre & Museum](#) (home to the UK's only Primary school age-appropriate Holocaust-related educational exhibition), 📌 [The Imperial War Museum](#) (whose revised Holocaust exhibition opened in 2021), and 📌 [The United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation](#) (who are co-ordinating the establishment of the UK's new Holocaust memorial and learning centre in London).

Guidelines for good practice in learning & teaching about the Holocaust can also be found on the websites of the 📌 [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#), 📌 [The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#), and 📌 [Yad Vashem](#) (the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel).



Holocaust education & site-based education

- the essentials of good practice



Site-based education (1)

considering Holocaust-related sites as places of emotional learning

Holocaust-related sites are more than monuments, fields, or museum buildings. They are complex spaces that can be intellectually and emotionally challenging. As we have already considered, they are spaces where:

- history happened
- history is retold
- history is remembered.

Genocide took place in these spaces, and for most young people this will be their first encounter with such a space. Emotion will play a significant role in your group's learning at the site and afterwards, so it is important to spend some time thinking about how the sites you are planning to visit might emotionally resonate with your group, and how they might emotionally interact with the spaces.

Why are Holocaust-related sites spaces of emotional learning?

Sites are emotionally demanding for a number of reasons. There might be images and information around the site that are emotionally difficult to see or read. Guides might tell stories, or provide detailed information about the site's past, that is difficult to comprehend. Members of your group might have personal connections to the site (such as family histories connected to the place). Physical monuments might challenge them to reflect on the nature of humanity, or the scale of the loss of life at the site. Young people might also be surprised by how they react to seeing other visitors' responses at the site, or even how things like the weather or wildlife affects their emotions during the visit.

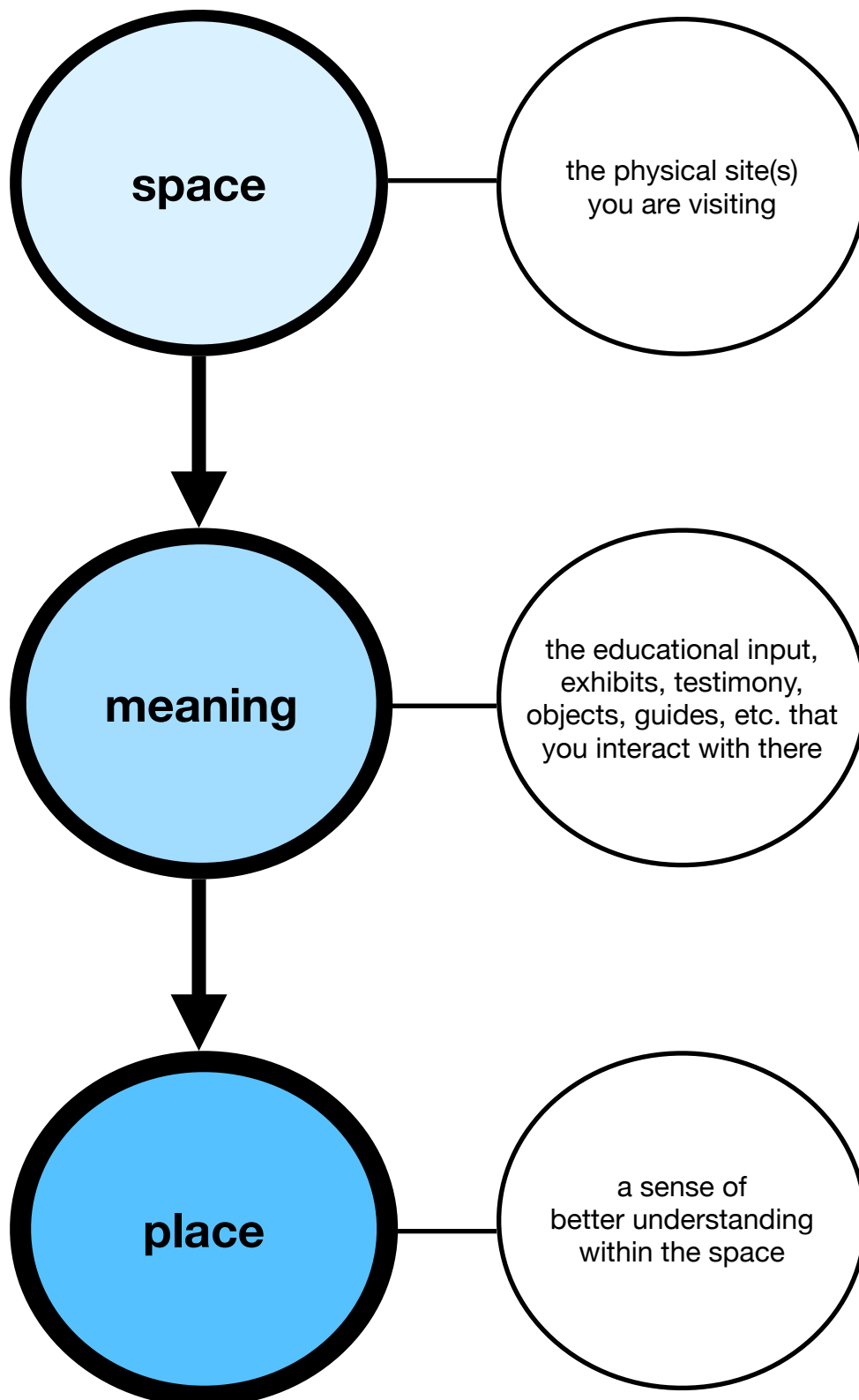
You cannot tell how an individual might respond to a site - or even how they might react to a particular object or exhibit they might see there. What is important is that you are aware and alert to these possible reactions, and that your young people know that you are there to support them.

How do young people make sense of Holocaust-related sites they visit?

It is important to think about how the young people in your group might make sense of these emotional (and emotive) sites. To do this, it is helpful to draw from research in the field of Human Geography. Academics in this subject often talk about '**space**' and '**place**' as different things, and this might be useful when we think about the role emotion plays at Holocaust-related sites. Geographers think of a '**space**' as a **physical area**, like a patch of land. Therefore, a Holocaust-related museum (like the one on the site of the former Nazi camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau) could be a physical '**space**' of a few square miles. As visitors, we try to get a sense of '**place**' within that physical '**space**' when we visit. We do this when we start to try to **make sense** of the '**space**' through our interactions with the exhibits, objects, and the stories we hear there. These all help us to understand the **space** better - and this is how we get our sense of **place** within it. Some Geographers say that '**place**' is '**space**' imbued with meaning. Without gaining a sense of '**place**' at the site, the young people in your group will feel little connection with the '**space**' you have taken them to. Emotion can be a powerful learning tool in this - if they don't feel connected to the '**space**' then they are unlikely to learn much from visiting the site, or to find a sense of '**place**' within it.

On the next page is a reminder of what 'space' and 'place' mean at Holocaust-related sites. Then, on the following pages we will look at an example of a specific museum 'space' and how sharing survivor testimony there might help your young people find their sense of 'place' within it...

'Space' & 'Place' at Holocaust-related sites



the goods wagon at Auschwitz II Birkenau



If you took a group of young people to the site of the former Nazi camp at Auschwitz II Birkenau, they would see a single goods wagon on the railway tracks (pictured above).

This is an original German-made wagon that has been placed on the tracks to symbolise the transportation of around 424,000 Jewish people from Hungary, beginning in May 1944 (source: [Yad Vashem](#)). Hungarians were the largest single group of victims at Birkenau and the wagon represents the many transports that arrived at the camp during its operation.

The exhibit takes up a small physical 'space' at the vast site. Young people cannot understand what it would have been like to be transported in this way to the camp and should not be asked to 'imagine' what it might have been like (this would risk trivialising the event). However, they can get a better understanding of the experiences of those who were, by hearing testimony from survivors.

For example, we could share the following extract from Eva Behar's testimony with them. This extract (on the next page) comes from '**My Story: Eva Behar**' and is available to read or download from [the AJR My Story website](#), along with many other first-hand testimonies.



Further information about the goods wagon at Birkenau is available on the [Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial Museum website](#).

including testimony from the AJR 'My Story' archive...



"We got onto a train that only had wagons. I don't know how many of us were in the wagon, I can't tell you, but I know we hardly had room to sit down. There was a little opening on the right hand side between the slats, big enough to fit maybe two faces in. I was with my aunt, my uncle and my cousin and all the people we knew from the town. I can't tell you what I was wearing, I brought very few clothes, but I remember my bag and in my bag were preserves, some bread and the jewellery... We were given no food on the train, only water. We stopped maybe twice and there was a bucket in the wagon and that's what we had to use as a toilet. I had no idea what was happening. We were told we were going to work and that is what we believed.

The journey lasted perhaps three days and we arrived in Auschwitz around 12 May 1944. All of a sudden we heard RAUS! RAUS! RAUS! (GET OUT!)... We got out and we were told to line up in fives and to separate men and women.... As we were standing there we saw this colossal man approaching us... he was separating everyone in the line... My aunt and the others were straight away sent to the right and I went to left... and that was the last time I saw my aunt... I was the only one to survive. It was only many years later that I learned my sister Hajnal (Dawn) and my nephew Robert also died in Auschwitz; my children are named after them".



How does hearing testimony like this help young people understand the 'space' they are in?

Eva's testimony provides **context** for young people. Rather than just see the wagon as an object on display, it helps them see the exhibit as having relationships with **real** people and **real** experiences. They can engage with it on a more **human**, relational level. From an educational perspective, this is when they can start to consider their own sense of 'place' in the exhibition 'space'. Thus, **the 'space' has become imbued with meaning.**



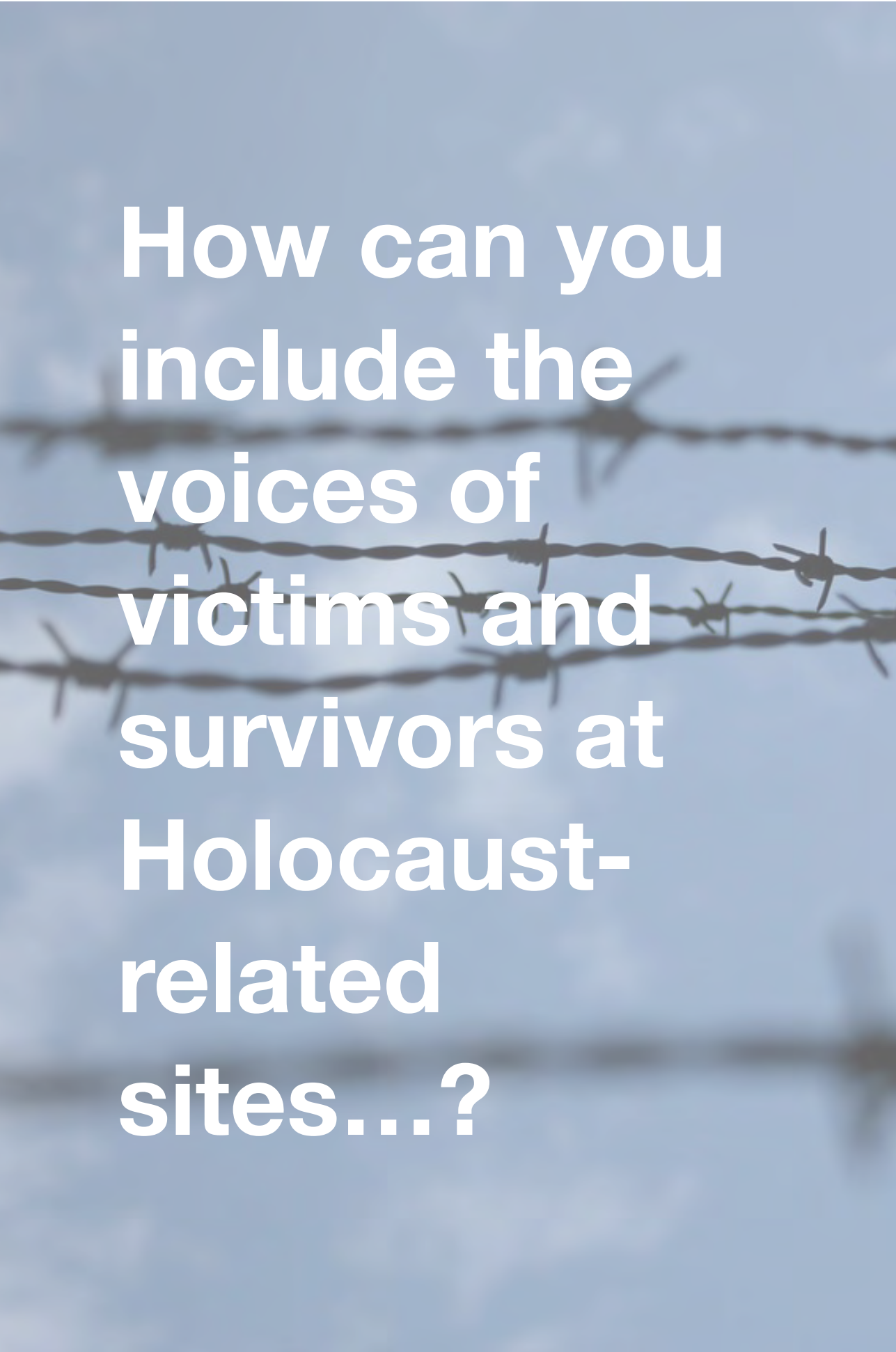
Can a sense of 'place' be overwhelming?

It is not easy to hear what happened to Eva and her family, and we must use caution sharing potentially distressing content with young people.

What we are trying to do is to find a balance here - between the potential for the exhibit to be meaningless to the young people, and the potential for them to be overwhelmed with grief by it. Some young people will find this more emotionally challenging than others - this is another reason why it is important that you know the group you are taking well and have support available to them (including using the resources in this pack).

Used judiciously, **testimony humanises the sites you are visiting.** You should consider researching testimony related to the sites you are visiting prior to your visit so that you can share extracts with the group in situ to add another perspective to what they are seeing.

On the next pages, we will think a little more about the role of testimony during site visits.



**How can you
include the
voices of
victims and
survivors at
Holocaust-
related
sites...?**

Site-based education (2)

including testimony during site visits

We have seen on the previous pages how testimony can add to a visit to a Holocaust-related site. Stories such as Eva's can help young people relate to the site in different, more emotionally connecting ways. These connections can, in turn, help them to better make sense of the 'space' they are in, and begin to find their sense of 'place' within it. This is when their learning can become truly impactful and *transformative*.

? Where can you access suitable survivor testimonies?

Your group may be fortunate to hear from a Holocaust survivor in person (and we would always recommend this), but survivors are becoming less available to do this as time moves on. If you are not able to hear from a survivor first-hand, there are thousands of recorded and written testimonies you can draw from with young people. These include projects like the AJR's ? ['Refugee Voices Testimony Archive'](#) (a collection of filmed testimonies and around 4,500 photos and documents), and the AJR's ? ['My Story'](#) collection of life stories (available as downloadable books or hard-copies). Both archives are fully searchable and freely available.

Perhaps the largest and best known archive is the ? [USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive](#) (founded in 1994 by film director Steven Spielberg). This vast archive has a partner website for use in educational settings called ? [iWitness](#).

There are also archives of recorded testimonies that use Virtual Reality technology so that young people can interact with pre-recordings of survivor testimony. These include the ? [National Holocaust Centre and Museum's 'Forever Project'](#) and the ? [Holocaust Educational Trust's 'Testimony 360'](#) project. It is important to note that these VR technologies do not recreate or reconstruct people or places, instead they use the technology to help young people interact with the original filmed testimonies in new ways.

? Who else's testimony could you include?

There are increasing numbers of speakers who are from Holocaust survivors' families. These may be members of the 2nd Generation (their children), or the 3rd Generation (their grandchildren), for example. The UK charity ? [Generation2Generation](#) works with many of these speakers to prepare them to talk in educational settings. You can book speakers through their website. The AJR's Refugee Voices Testimony Archive also has a growing number of 2nd Generation recorded testimonies called ? ['Next Generations'](#).

You might also consider including testimony from other people connected to a site - such as perpetrators, rescuers, or liberators. These voices will help young people further understand and explore the complexity of the events of the Holocaust from different perspectives.

The UK Government and the Association of Jewish Refugees have created ? [the Holocaust Testimony UK portal](#). This important archive gathers together testimonies from refugees and survivors who came to the UK, as well as liberators and rescuers.



(C) the Association of Jewish Refugees

Including testimony at sites

some essentials of good practice

You have seen how hearing testimony should be central to developing young people's understandings of the events of the Holocaust and the sites they are visiting.

Below are some key elements of good practice to bear in mind when including testimony in your site visits:

✓ **Do** invest time planning which testimonies you are going to include during your site visit. Listen to and read them thoroughly to make sure they are **suitable** and **age-appropriate**.

✓ **Do** think about which survivor testimonies to include so that your group hear from **a variety of sources and different experiences**. This will help them understand that *different* people experienced *different* things in *different* places and at *different* times during the Holocaust.

✓ **Do** consider **when and where** to include testimonies at sites. Think about the logistics - will everyone be able to hear the testimony? Will they have time to reflect on it? Will you be sharing copies of the testimonies with your group to read independently?

✓ **Do** include **different testimonies** - such as survivors, victims, rescuers, bystanders, perpetrators, liberators and those involved with the site post-war. Also consider 2nd and 3rd Generation testimonies.

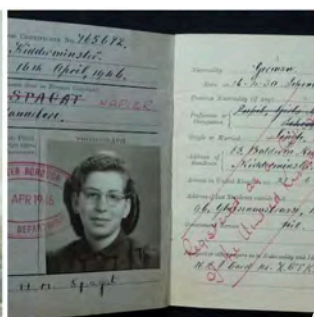
✓ **Do** encourage your group to ask questions about the testimonies they hear. It is important that they realise they can engage with them critically, while still being respectful of them.

✗ **Don't** include testimony that is unnecessarily **shocking or graphic**. This risks upsetting or shocking your group and they will not be able to learn if they feel like this.

✗ **Don't** use **fictional** accounts. There are so many real-life accounts available and it is always best to use factually accurate sources. Otherwise there is a risk that your group will confuse facts with fiction.

✗ **Don't** use **too many testimonies** from different sources - this might be confusing for your group. It is better to include the testimony of a small number of people (perhaps including the testimonies of one or two people that you revisit throughout your visit).

✗ **Don't** show or read **overly long testimonies**, or use technologies unnecessarily. It is better to work with shorter testimonies, or extracts, in uncomplicated formats for young people to engage with.



Telling fact from fiction

understanding Holocaust-related sites as 'contested spaces'...

As we have seen with the goods wagon exhibit at the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum, very few sites remain untouched or undeveloped - over the years, most have added layers of (re-)presentation, such as objects, artefacts, information boards, or interactive content. These will have continued to change over time as historical knowledge, technology, or visitor needs have evolved. Consequently, you should think of any Holocaust-related site as a 'contested space' - a space that has changed over time (and that will continue to do so). The young visitors in your group will need to be supported in understanding this.

Why are Holocaust-related sites 'contested spaces'?

To return to where we started, Holocaust-related sites are spaces where the Holocaust **happened, is retold, and is remembered**. People will have different opinions about all three. For example, various survivors of a concentration camp will have different recollections of what happened there, for a variety of reasons (such as when they were there, which victim group they belonged to, or which part of the camp they experienced). This is why it is important to include a variety of testimonies at a site, to give different perspectives. Historians will also have different opinions about the site and how to retell it, and these will change and evolve over time. Memorialisation at sites can be bound up in national narratives, and these can be affected by time or local politics. All of these are contestations. When you visit a Holocaust-related site it is **a contested space** - and you are visiting it at a particular point in time at which it is being understood, retold, and remembered in a particular way. It will change. Your experiences of it will change. And that's okay.



How can you help your young people understand that the site is a 'contested space'?

Helping young people understand the site as a contested space can be challenging. You could focus on a few key questions to help them with this:

- ▶ this is what the site looks like now - do you think it has always looked like this?
- ▶ how do you think the site has changed over time?
- ▶ why do you think it changed?
- ▶ who do you think decided how it looks today?
- ▶ what do you think is authentic in the site? What is reconstructed? What is entirely new here?
- ▶ how do you think victims have been remembered here?

The first four questions will help your young people reflect on how the site has changed over time - for example from a working camp to a museum, or from a museum of the 1990s, to a present-day museum. The penultimate question will help them think about the materiality of the site - for example, what is original, what is authentic but has been brought here from another place, what has been rebuilt or recreated, and what has been built from scratch?

To take the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum as an example, this question will help them think about the following iconic spaces more critically:

1. The famous '**Arbeit Macht Frei**' sign above the entrance to Auschwitz I is a **reconstruction**. The original authentic sign was stolen in 2009 and has been preserved for presentation in one of the museum's indoor displays. The sign they can see outdoors today is a historically accurate, modern reconstruction of the original.

2. The remnants of the gas chambers at Auschwitz II Birkenau are authentic ruins of the former buildings. What they can see today is what was left of the original buildings after the Nazis tried to hide the evidence of their crimes by blowing them up towards the end of the war. They are not reconstructions.



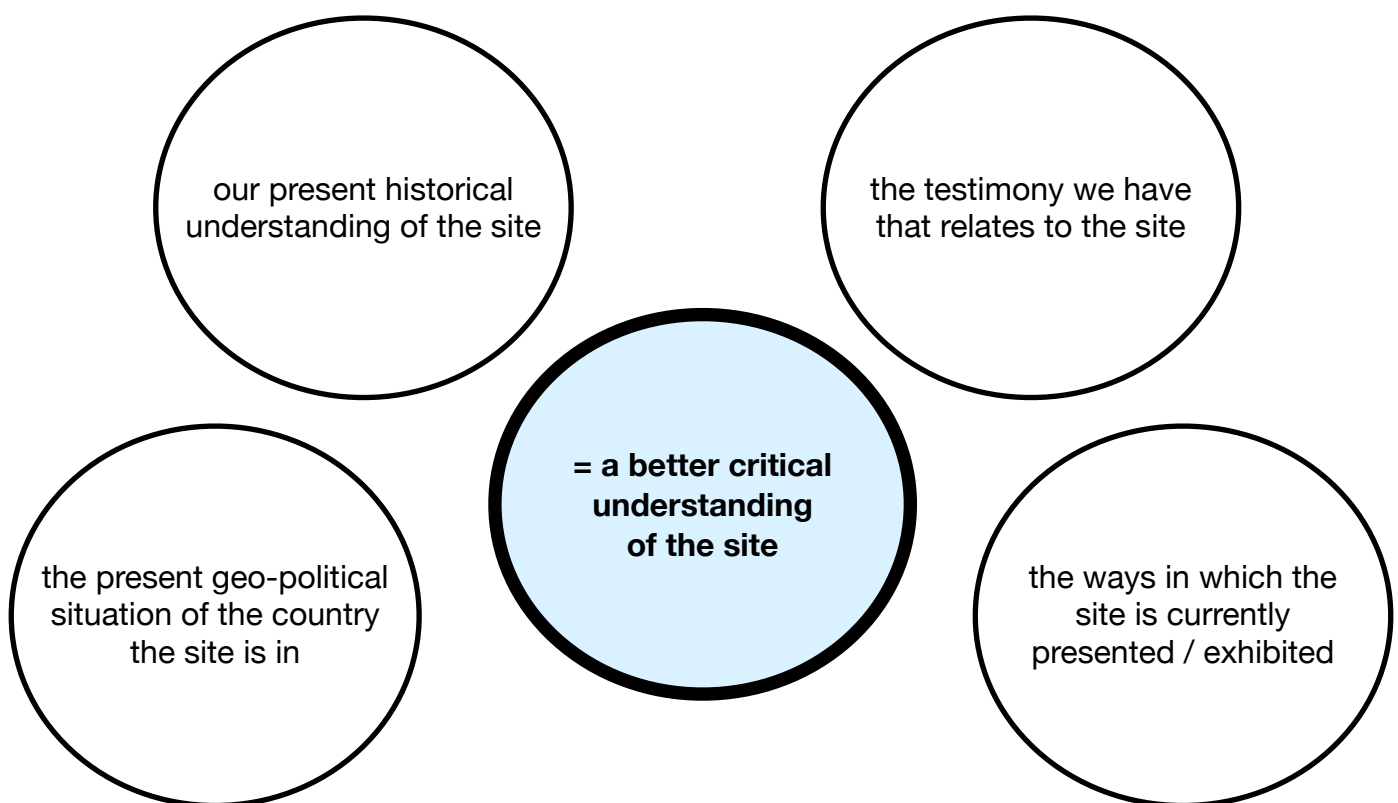
Is it okay to get the young people in your group to be *critical* of a site they are visiting?

Yes - it is better that they have a critical understanding of the site than simply accepting a single narrative as it is presented in an exhibition, or from a lone testimony.

Young people should better understand the site as a complicated space, that has evolved over time. We may know a lot about the site now, or very little. We may have many testimonies that mention the site, or very few. Your young people should be helped to consider the site as a **transitory space**, and that they are visiting it as it is currently being interpreted and presented.

The following model illustrates how young people can be helped towards a better critical understanding of the site(s) they are visiting:

Understanding Holocaust-related sites as contested spaces:



Including other victim groups

hearing different experiences at sites

When visiting Holocaust-related sites it is important to include the experiences and testimony of other victim groups. As well as recognising and honouring the memory of these other victims, their inclusion will add layers of complexity to your young people's developing understanding of what the Holocaust was (and what it wasn't).

Why should you include other victims at Holocaust-related sites?

The Holocaust was (specifically) the attempted murder of all Jewish people by the Nazis and their collaborators (this is something we will explore further in Section 2 of this resource pack). Other victim groups were also persecuted, including Roma & Sinti people, homosexuals, people with disabilities, and Jehovah's Witnesses. There were vast numbers of Polish and Soviet victims of the Nazis and their

collaborators who were not Jewish. In many camps where Jewish people were victims of the Holocaust, other victim groups were the majority of prisoners and victims. It is important not to get into a discussion that seems like you are comparing a 'hierarchy' of victims here - but rather to acknowledge that these often very different persecutions were happening simultaneously. Including the experiences of other victim groups during your visit to a Holocaust-related site will enhance your young people's learning about the site, and the wider events of the Holocaust and the war.

An example (below) illustrates the experiences of many hundreds of Polish Catholic priests. In this case, the victim was sent to Auschwitz in 1941. When planning for your site visit, research similar narratives and testimonies from other victims that you could include during your visit.

Fr Józef Kowalski SDB



Józef Kowalski was born in 1911 in Siedliska. He suffered from poor health as a child but was an exceptional student at the Salesian School in Oświęcim. The Salesians are a Roman Catholic Order of priests who work with young people around the world in schools, religious houses, retreat centres, and youth clubs. Józef was drawn to the Salesians who taught him, and decided that he had a vocation to join them when he finished school.

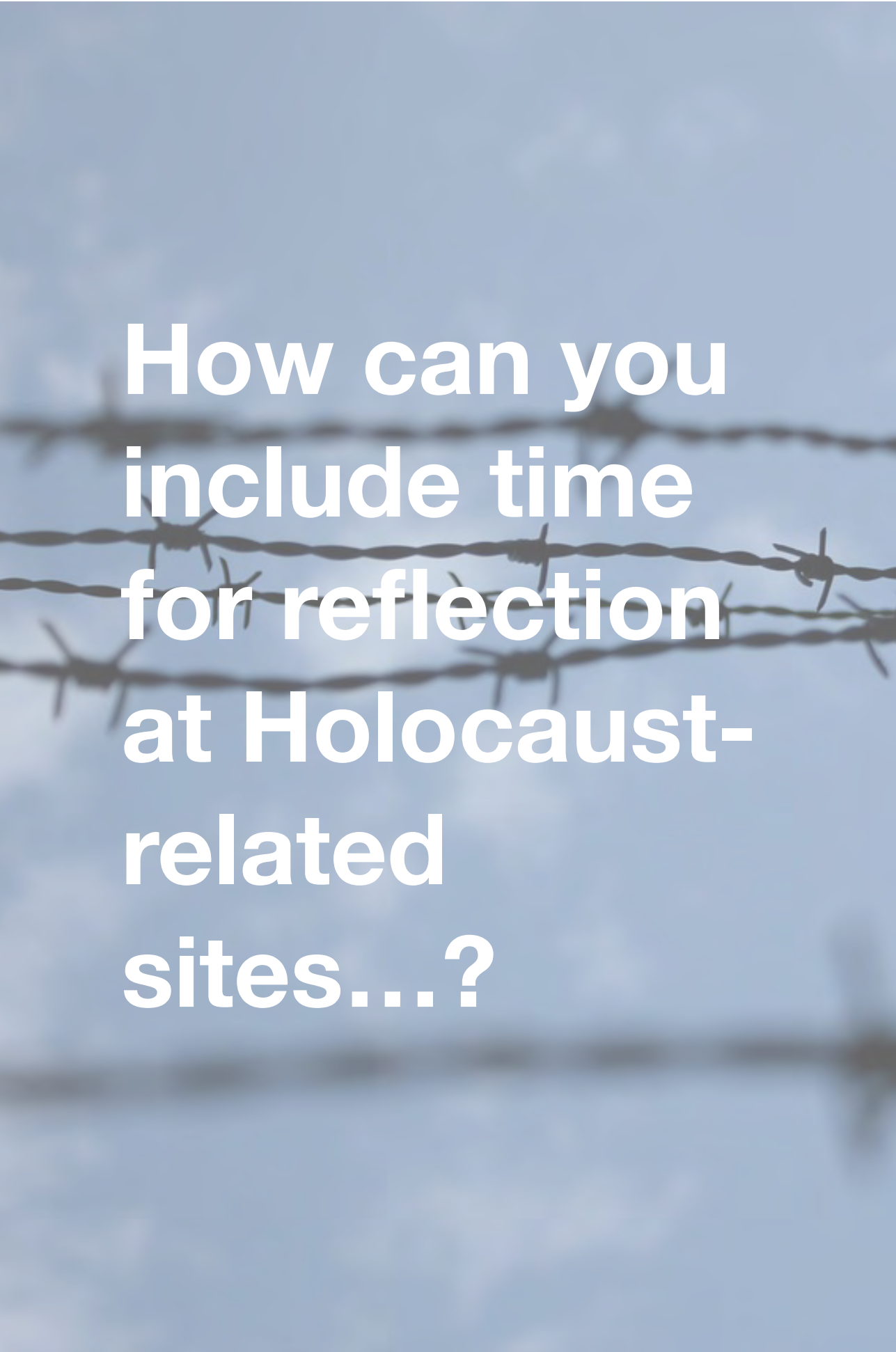
Józef Kowalski was ordained a priest in 1938 in Kraków. He continued to work in the city and led choirs, sports teams, and youth groups in the Salesian parish there. Fr Józef had been a priest for less than a year and a half when war broke out. He continued his parish and youth work, but was arrested along with 11 other Salesians on 23rd May 1941. He was sent first to a prison in Kraków, before eventually being transported to Auschwitz at the of the following month.

The Nazis regarded priests as a threat to their authority. They were leaders in their communities, who were well respected, and were often active in Polish resistance activities. Consequently the Nazis persecuted them across the country - many hundreds were imprisoned and killed.

Fr Józef suffered brutal treatment at Auschwitz, but continued to serve and care for others as a priest. After just over a year in the camp he was murdered by two of the prisoner-overseers (known as 'kapos'). A survivor of the camp said that Fr Józef "brought God to his fellow prisoners" there. He was beatified (a significant step on the way to sainthood) by Pope John Paul II in 1999.

Photo: Fr Józef Kowalski SDB © Salesian Archive, Cracow

Read more about Fr Józef in 'The Salesian Martyrs of Auschwitz' (Alasdair Richardson, 2021, Don Bosco Publications, UK)



**How can you
include time
for reflection
at Holocaust-
related
sites...?**

Sites as reflective spaces (1)

making time for your group to reflect & respond to the sites

Visits to Holocaust-related sites often involve a busy itinerary with tight timescales. You might have transport to catch at a particular time, a pre-booked time slot at a museum, hotel check-ins to co-ordinate, meals to plan... as well as lots of teenagers to organise! With so much to think about it is easy to forget to build in times to pause during your visit... but these times are a vital part of helping your group better understand what they are seeing at the sites.

What is a 'pause' and why do you need them during a site visit?

Sites can be overwhelming. Visitors need time to pause, and to reflect during their time at the site. A pause might take the form of a few minutes' reflection, some paired thinking time, or the sharing of a reading, some testimony, or a prayer, for example. Research shows us that young people benefit enormously from having time built into their site visit to pause, ask questions, and articulate how they are feeling (if they are comfortable doing so). Pausing helps minimise the risk that they become overwhelmed by what they are seeing and experiencing at the site.

How (and when) should you pause during a site visit?

Try to build in regular, brief pauses throughout your visit. For example, you could gather your group together (or in smaller groups) to reflect on an exhibit they have just seen, or on a piece of testimony they have just heard. This might take a couple of minutes but it gives you a chance to 'check in' with them - to see how they are and to let them know that you understand that they have a lot to take in and process.

Once you have gathered them together, start by asking them non-invasive questions. Don't pick on anyone, instead ask depersonalised 'we' or 'anyone' questions. For example:

- ▶ how are we all?
- ▶ how are we all feeling / doing?
- ▶ what do we think about what we have just seen / heard?
- ▶ does anyone have any thoughts about where we have just been?
- ▶ does anyone have any questions about anything so far?

Remind your group that there are no 'right' answers to these questions - different people will respond to different sites in different ways. It is important that they know you are providing time for them to reflect and articulate their thoughts and feelings (and only if they want to).

If your group seem reticent to respond to your open questions, you could provide a prompt by saying something like "I don't know about you, but I found that exhibition really challenging...?". If you model a question like this, you should not be trying to manipulate an answer - instead you are showing that you too are struggling to comprehend what you have just seen or experienced... and that it's okay to talk about it.

If you are being guided at the site, talk to your guide about when / where you could pause during your visit. They might have lots to show your group - don't be afraid to impress on them that pauses are an important part of safeguarding your group, even if that means not seeing or doing everything.

What should you do if young people get upset during one of these pauses?

It is possible that when a young person pauses to reflect, they might become overwhelmed by their emotions. It is important the adults in your group are alert to this and are able to provide support if this happens. This might necessitate taking the young person to one side for a while, before rejoining the group. It's important to acknowledge with them that people get emotional at sites like this, and that this is okay.



What if it's one of the adults who gets upset?

It's important to remember that the adults accompanying the group will also find the visit emotionally challenging (for a variety of reasons). Balancing our own emotions with being a professional educator can be challenging - particularly for those who have not visited the site before. It's okay for us to show our emotions at sites - young people might actually find this gives them 'permission' to acknowledge and show their own feelings. A resource is also included (later in this pack) to help prepare accompanying adults as a group for their visit.



Is it appropriate to hold a memorial service at the site?

Yes, and it can really support young people in starting to process what they have seen and learned at the site, but there are some things to think carefully about...

From a practical point of view, you may need to speak with the authorities at the site in advance of your visit about whether they allow groups to gather for such purposes there. If it is a busy museum, for example, they may be able to offer you particular spaces or rooms to do this, or ask that your service happens during a particular part of the day. You will then need to think about the group and whether the space and timing will be

suitable - for example, if it is an outdoor space, what will you do if it rains?

You will need to think carefully about the content and structure of your service. British students are used to daily acts of collective worship ('assemblies') at school so this might be a good format to use. You will then need to consider the following:

- ▶ who is going to lead the service?
- ▶ when will it be in your itinerary? Often, memorial services are towards the end of a site visit and act as way of drawing the visit to a close, for example
- ▶ what will be included in the service - for example, readings, reflections, an act of remembrance (such as a candle lighting ceremony)?
- ▶ will the service have a religious element?
- ▶ how will the young people be included / active during the service - for example, reading a piece of testimony, or a poem?
- ▶ will music be included?
- ▶ will there be times of silence / stillness?

It is also important to think about how members of your group will be able to opt out of elements (or all) of the service if they wish to. It is important not to coerce them into participating, particularly with religious aspects (they should have the same right to withdraw that they have for acts of collective worship in school).

It is very common to see memorial services taking place at sites - some are religious, some are not, some are quiet and contemplative, some are noisy celebrations of life and survival. You might find that other visitors want to join you, or listen in to your service, so think about how you feel about that and how you will manage this from a safeguarding point of view.

Whatever you plan to do for your memorial service, you should speak with your group in advance about your planned service, and about how to be respectful and inclusive of others.

Should you include personal stories in your visit?

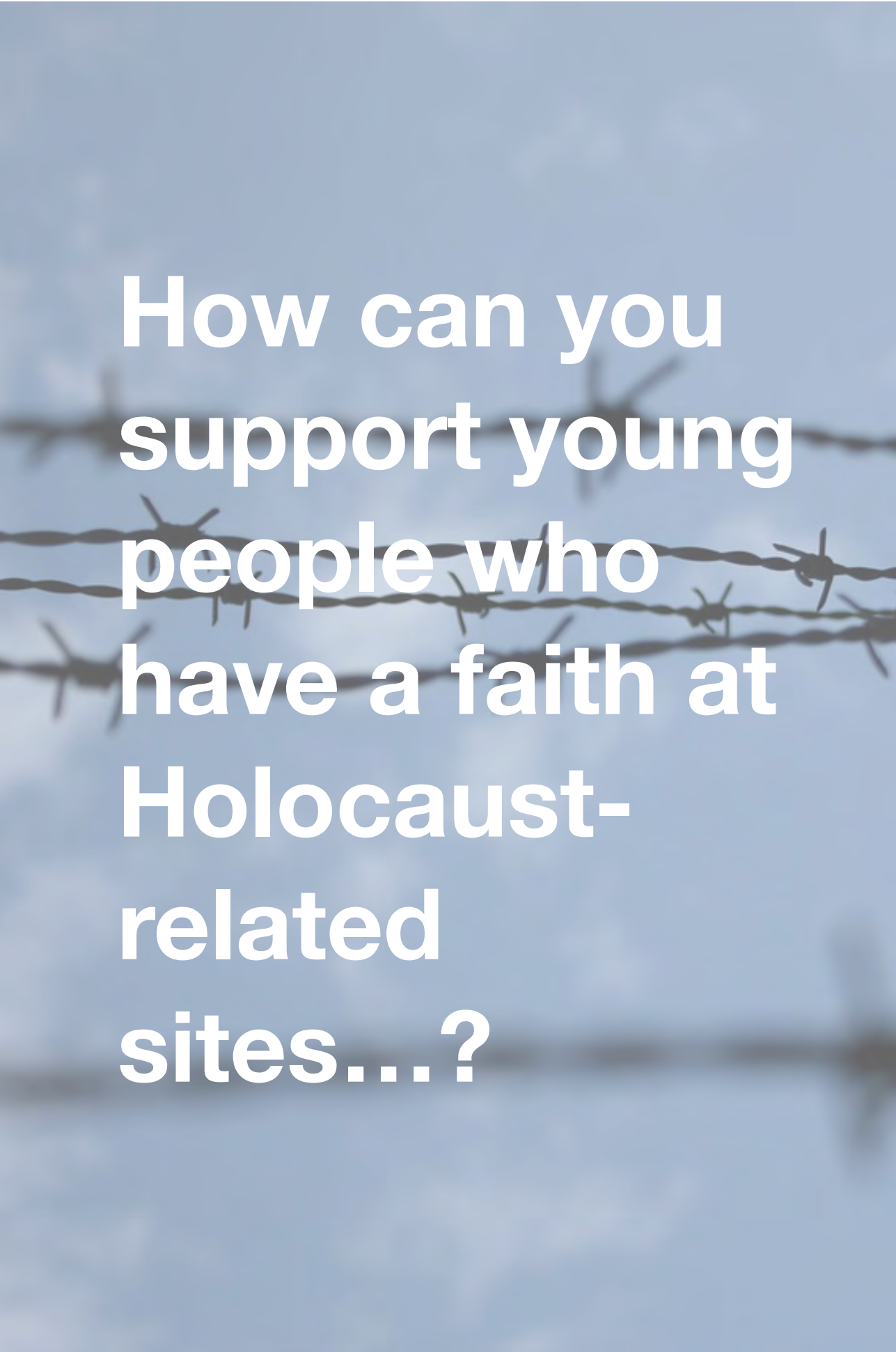
It is possible that members of your group will have personal connections to the site(s) you are visiting. This might involve having family members who were victims at the site (who may have survived, or not), or who were liberators. Consequently, group members might want to remember these people, mourn them, or mark their lives in some way, or to celebrate their own survival. This may be the first time they have engaged with their family histories. They may feel very comfortable talking about them, or they may find this really challenging - particularly when confronted with the actual site.

Getting to know your group well (before your visit) will enable you to discuss these family connections. Members of the group might wish to speak about them on-site (or not). They may wish to research their family history at the site, or look for their names on a memorial, for example. They may wish to give their family's testimony at some point during the visit - perhaps during your memorial service. It is important to be flexible and responsive to what these group members want to do. They may be emotional about this and you need to consider how you might support them during your visit (and afterwards).

How can you show your respects at the site?

There are several ways in which we can show our respects at a Holocaust-related site. Some of your group might want to leave something there (like a card, or flowers). Some may wish to light a candle or place stones (a traditional Jewish act of commemoration). You may need to prepare for this in advance (such as purchasing candles) and check with the site whether items can be left there (and where). Nothing should ever be taken from a site (and it is illegal to do so at some sites).





**How can you
support young
people who
have a faith at
Holocaust-
related
sites...?**

Sites as reflective spaces (2)

visiting with religious groups, or individual people of faith



Do religious groups visit differently to other groups? Is it okay to say prayers at a site?

Your group might be from a religious community - for example a denominational school, or a religious youth group. If this is the case, you might wish to include more opportunities for religious reflection, memorialisation, or prayers, during your site visit. Again, it is important to ensure that everyone feels included in these activities, but that no-one feels forced into them. You need to balance religious observance with learning while you are at the site.

Examples of religious observance at sites might include:

- ▶ a Jewish group member choosing to wear a kippah at a site of mass murder because it is considered a burial site / cemetery
- ▶ a Christian group member wishing to say a prayer at Block 11 at the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum because it is considered a site of Christian martyrdom (of St Maximilian Kolbe and others)
- ▶ group members wishing to leave candles, flowers, prayers, or to place a stone as an act of memorial at a site.

There are a number of prayers that are suitable to be said at sites - an example is on **RESOURCE SHEET 1** (an example of an interfaith prayer, written for the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust). Some Holocaust-related sites now incorporate places of worship, which you might decide to visit or hold a memorial service in. For example, the site of the former concentration camp at Dachau has [four such places](#) (a Jewish memorial, the Catholic 'Mortal Agony of Christ Chapel', the Protestant 'Church of Reconciliation', and a Russian Orthodox chapel). There is also a Catholic Convent just outside the perimeter fence of the museum, with a chapel that is accessible through an adjoining gateway. Near to the Auschwitz Birkenau

Memorial & Museum there is the interfaith [Centre for Dialogue and Prayer](#). And, of course, many surviving pre-war European synagogues are today both memorial sites and working places of worship. Visiting such places might be especially meaningful for faith groups.



Can sites raise difficult questions for faith groups?

Site visits can be very challenging in particular ways for people of faith. For example, sites raise questions about religion and religious responses to the Holocaust. The site might raise challenging questions such as asking 'where was God?' or 'how could God let this happen?' You will need to consider whether you want to address such questions directly at the site, or elsewhere, or at all.

Issues of faith raise important teaching points for groups at sites. On the following pages (**RESOURCE SHEET 2-4**) are some further extracts from the [AJR's 'My Story'](#) collection of life stories. You could include some of these extracts in your visit to illustrate the complex relationships that some survivors (and their families) had with their faith, beliefs, religious practices, and other faiths. You could discuss with your group how some survivors believed that God saved them, while others moved away from their faith during or since the Holocaust. There are many challenging questions for people of faith visiting Holocaust-related sites and it is important that you try not to avoid or ignore them with your group.

Please be aware that some Jewish communities prefer to write the name of God as G-d due to an interpretation of Deuteronomy 12:3-4. You might consider recognising this in any printed materials you produce for your site visit.

An interfaith prayer

Loving God, we come to you with heavy hearts, remembering the six million Jewish souls murdered during the Holocaust.

In the horrors of that history, when so many groups were targeted because of their identity, and in genocides which followed, we recognise destructive prejudices that drive people apart.

Forgive us when we give space to fear, negativity and hatred of others, simply because they are different from us.

In the light of God, we see everyone as equally precious manifestations of the Divine, and can know the courage to face the darkness.

Through our prayers and actions, help us to stand together with those who are suffering, so that light may banish all darkness, love will prevail over hate and good will triumph over evil.

Amen

*This prayer was written for Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, and Senior Imam Qari Asim.
Reproduced by kind permission of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.*

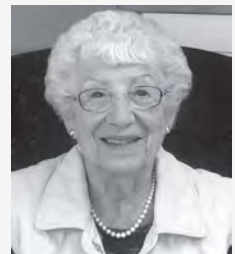


"All my grandparents were Jewish. My mother was raised Jewish though I didn't know that; she never went to a synagogue and did not practice any of the Jewish rituals at home. My father had become a Catholic in 1911 when he was in his 20s. He read himself into his Christian belief. He kept it up and went regularly to Mass with my sister and me on Sundays... My parents were married in St Stephen's Cathedral, presumably not in front of everybody, but in the sacristy – the side room where the priest puts his vestments on – because my mother was not Catholic. The wedding was kept quiet because it was a disgrace when a Catholic married out of the religion – a little like the Jewish idea of marrying out. I went to a Catholic school. Now there is a Holocaust memorial on the Judenplatz (Jewish Square), where the school was".

Extract from 'My Story - Fr Francis Wahle' (p8).

Despite his Catholic upbringing, Francis was identified as Jewish by the Nazis and came to England with his sister on a Kindertransport in January 1939.

"When the Nazis first arrived in Austria, in addition to persecuting Jewish people, they closed all the convent schools and nuns were no longer allowed to teach. The children were still allowed to live in the convent however and the local authority acquired responsibility for their schooling. I remember them coming into the convent to inform us which new schools we were going to attend. This was the first time I realised that I was different to my friends. They were sent together to a school somewhere else in the district but I was singled out and made to stand to one side. I just couldn't understand it or know what to make of it. I felt frightened and lost.



Now, as a child of 12, I found out the reason why I was different. I discovered that my father was Jewish. I was, therefore, sent to a Jewish school and made to wear a yellow star on my way to and from school. From that time onwards my journey to school was horrible. People would call me names and throw things at me. When I had been at the convent school I would go with my friends to play in the nearby park. I couldn't do that anymore because in the park were signs which said, Jude Verboten! (Jews forbidden)".

Extract from 'My Story - Gabriele Keenaghan BEM' (p13).

Gabriele was born in Vienna. She was sent to board at a local convent school when her mother died. She left Austria in April 1939 aboard a Kindertransport bound for England.

"He [my father] told me about the time he was arrested because he didn't have his documents with him... He was taken to Milano Central Station and put on a train with other Jews, on the infamous platform 21 (beneath the station and still in place today), the platform from which the cattle trucks left to go to the death camps and other camps in Italy.

On this occasion, the Archbishop of Milano, Cardinal Schuster, was told there had been some arrests and went to the station. He saw Papà on the train and heard his plea: "I've left my wife and two children at home. Help!" The Cardinal told the guards, "He works for me," and they handed my father over, as well as a few other people.



After my father told me this story, I wanted to know more about the Archbishop of Milano. The fact that he helped Jewish people wasn't actually documented. What was documented though was that he was an early supporter of the Fascist Party. When Mussolini introduced the racial laws, he distanced himself from 'Il Duce' not agreeing with his ideology. In later years I learnt first-hand that many Jews were helped by Cardinal Schuster".

Extract from 'My Story - Anna Russell' (p23).

Anna survived the war with her parents and siblings in hiding in various places in Italy. She moved to England in 1961.



"I spoke German, and my parents would drop in many Yiddish words, which I only discovered later in life were not actually German. I attended Cheder on Saturday mornings and was taken to synagogue on special holidays, either by my parents or my aunt. My parents were not observant Jews, although my mother came from a very religious family. At Cheder I learned Hebrew and stories. I have always been fascinated by Hebrew. We went to the New Synagogue... I liked going and was always overawed by it - I still am, but our Judaism was something we left behind in Berlin".

Extract from 'My Story - Anita Grant' (p10).

Anita was born in Berlin and emigrated to England with her parents when she was 11 years old. They arrived just weeks before the outbreak of war.



“People will say: ‘You don’t go to the synagogue, you don’t eat kosher food, how can you say you’re a Jew?’ Yes, I’m an atheist, I don’t eat kosher food, and I denied my Jewishness when I was growing up because I wanted to be the same as everybody else. And yet now I feel my Jewishness very much, and that is because of my parents. They too rarely went to synagogue and never talked to me about being Jewish, they just carried on trying to make a good life for themselves and for us. Yet as we discovered from the early letters between

my father and mother, underneath it all they had a strong feeling about Jewish traditions...

I have a menorah. For a long time I didn’t even know what it was, but now it is an important part of the Jewishness that I feel”.

Extract from ‘My Story - Ruth Schwiening’ (p98).

Ruth’s family moved to Austria from Germany when she was very young. Her mother placed her in an orphanage to give her a better chance of securing a place on a Kindertransport. Her father had been arrested during the November Pogrom and imprisoned in Dachau. She arrived in England when she was just 3 years old.

“They [my adoptive parents in England] gave me a choice as to whether I wanted to be Jewish or not and whether or not I wanted a Jewish education. It was never really discussed but I did not have a Bar Mitzvah at 13. For many years I had mixed feelings about it, but at the age of 14 or 15, I made a conscious choice that I was Jewish and I wanted to stay Jewish. I was Bar Mitzvah at 16 in the Amersham United Synagogue.



It had been, if you like, my slow Jewish awakening.

I felt that because of my background and what had happened to my parents, I could not not be Jewish. I did not want to deny my heritage. My parents had been Jewish by race and they had died because of it. I wanted to be Bar Mitzvah to show that I was Jewish. I could not deny the very thing that they had been killed for: it would almost render their death insignificant”.

Extract from ‘My Story - Ivan Shaw’ (p53).

Ivan was brought up in Yugoslavia (now Serbia), where he was imprisoned in a transit camp before being rescued by an aunt. He came to England from Yugoslavia in 1947 to live with another aunt and an uncle who adopted him.

Note: when Ivan says his “parents had been Jewish by race” this is how the Nazis identified them using their false scientific beliefs about different ‘races’ - Judaism is not a ‘race’.



Checklist

- ☐ There are many sources of expertise in Holocaust education. Have you accessed some of the research and resources and reflected on your planned visit in light of this expert advice?
- ☐ Have you considered how your young people might relate to the site on an emotional level? How have you ensured they can be supported?

- ☐ Have you incorporated first-hand testimony into your visit and itinerary?
- ☐ Where / when will you incorporate testimony?
- ☐ How will you ensure your young people hear a variety of testimony during their visit?

- ☐ Have you included 'pauses' for reflection in your itinerary?
- ☐ What will these pauses include (readings, testimony, prayers, other religious or secular content, etc.)?
- ☐ How will you accommodate the different religious beliefs or non-religious worldviews of your group?
- ☐ Are your 'pauses' inclusive of different religious or non-religious worldviews, and are they voluntary?

Notes



**How can you
support &
celebrate
diversity
during your
site visit...?**

'They're just like me'

supporting young people who see themselves reflected at the site

Holocaust-related sites are complicated spaces. They are spaces where a diversity of people were persecuted. It was the Nazis and their collaborators who saw the groups they persecuted as being simply 'all the same'. We should remind young people that this was incorrect. For example, Jewish people represent a huge range of beliefs, religious and non-religious practices, views, and cultures.

Sometimes this reminder prompts young people to reflect on their *own* identity - often in ways that are unexpected, or that they haven't thought about before.

? How might a young person 'see themselves' at a site?

Often young people will see or hear something at a Holocaust-related site that resonates with them personally. This might be an object, a photograph, or an extract of testimony which reflects their own lives or experiences in some way.

For example, a young person who identifies as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community might feel particularly threatened when confronted by content that explains the treatment of that

community under Nazi persecution. Others might identify with the age of a victim, a looted item of clothing, or a scene in a photograph. There are so many ways in which young people might connect or 'see themselves' in the narratives of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution of other groups that it is almost impossible to prepare for it. However, you could consider introducing them to a range of different histories before your visit, such as testimony from different persecuted groups, to prepare them for this possibility.

? How should you respond to your young people?

You should remain sensitive to the potential for these individual reactions. You should also be vigilant for reactions that might seem (at first) to be 'inappropriate' - for example, a young person might act angrily or insensitively when they feel under threat themselves. A student who laughs in a serious place is not necessarily responding inappropriately (although you will need to check they know it is inappropriate) - they might simply be dealing with complex and unexpected emotions that they don't know how to cope with. You should avoid adding to their potential trauma by admonishing them before taking time to understand their reaction.



From another perspective...

supporting young people's additional needs at Holocaust-related site

The young people in your group will all have varying individual educational needs. Beside their learning needs, they may have physical or emotional needs that should be considered when planning your visit to enable them to maximise their access to the site(s), and their learning while they are there.

Are Holocaust-related sites suitable for young people with additional needs?

Yes. As their educator it is your responsibility to ensure their needs are best met during your site visit. You will need to make sure you are familiar with their specific additional needs - by talking with the young person themselves, and perhaps their parent / carer, or other professionals (such as their teachers). As young adults, these members of your group will probably be able to talk to you themselves about what additional support they need and are comfortable with. For example, a young person with an additional physical need will know their body best and will be able to decide where they can walk, or where they may need to use a wheelchair.

Are Holocaust-related sites accessible?

Most sites make every effort to be fully accessible. However, since many sites are historic, authentic spaces, some specific areas will be less accessible. For example, the [!\[\]\(121c996de73948f037b88126d1f67074_img.jpg\) Anne Frank House](#) makes every effort to provide an accessible experience for their visitors (such as an audio guide for the visually-impaired, and a written guide for the hearing-impaired). However, the hidden annexe is understandably inaccessible to wheelchair users, given the steep and narrow access to it. Many sites and their museums have accessibility information on their websites, and are happy to answer any questions prior to your visit.

It is always advisable to check accessibility during your pre-visit and to plan for the needs of individual young people in your group - for example, ensuring there is an adult who can stay with a young person who is unable to access part of a site (and to have an alternative activity for them share).

How can you support the emotional needs of your young people at Holocaust-related sites?

Holocaust-related sites can be emotionally demanding. This might be particularly difficult for members of your group who are experiencing issues with their mental health or wellbeing. For example, some museum spaces can be dark and enclosed, which some young people might find anxiety-inducing. Educational content (such as information boards, or input from guides) can be distressing, and some young people will find this harder to deal with than others. It is important that you know your young people well and have an understanding of their differing emotional needs before your visit so that you can plan accordingly and ensure you are able to support them during your visit.

Young people may be very adept at 'masking' how they are feeling - creating 'pauses' and spaces for reflection throughout your visit will help to create safe spaces where they will feel more able to be honest and open about how they are feeling.

How can you support your young people's sensory needs at Holocaust-related sites?

Holocaust-related sites can be difficult for young people with additional sensory needs. For example, some sites can be extremely busy places with lots of people and noise. Others can be very empty, with very little guidance as to what to focus on at the site.

Some sites and museums will offer audio-description guides for those with visual impairments, or written guides for those with hearing impairments. Some sites will have interactive materials that can be touched, while others will discourage touching original artefacts or memorials.

Visiting [the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe](#) in Berlin, for example, is intended to be an interactive experience - visitors are encouraged to walk around and through the 2,710 'stelae' (rectangular, box-like structures of varying heights). The memorial is visceral - it can be touched. It is not uncommon to see children playing between the stelae (although this is controversial as some visitors find it disrespectful). Some young people might find the scale of the memorial overwhelming (it covers around 800 square metres). You could help to prepare your young people by letting them see the space before they visit, through tools such as the memorial's [Spherical Panorama of the Field of Stelae](#). Providing the opportunity for a virtual walk-through for young

people with sensory impairments could help them when they arrive at the site.

Other sites are less tactile - for example the [Holocaust Memorial on Vienna's Judenplatz](#) (pictured here). This memorial has signs explicitly asking visitors not to touch or sit on the memorial. The memorial (designed by British sculptor Rachel Whitehead) appears to be an inverted library - with rows of books whose spines are facing inward, with their leaves facing outward. This memorial challenges individual viewers to interpret it in their own various ways. However, this could be particularly difficult for young people with additional sensory needs. You could think about ways in which they might explore the textures of the memorial without physically interacting with it - for example, by bringing a thick book with you so that they can feel the physicality of the book, leaf through the pages, or feel the weight of it. Such sensory experiences might add to their understanding of the sculptor's intent and its impact on them and their learning.





? How can you include stories of people with additional needs at Holocaust-related sites?

As with any group who were victimised by the Nazis and their collaborators, it is important not to define the victims by a single characteristic, such as 'disability'. This is what the Nazis did to justify the persecution and murder of many people.

You have already thought about how young people might see themselves reflected at Holocaust-related sites, and this might be particularly felt by those with additional needs. The Nazis persecuted those who they classed as 'mentally' or 'physically disabled' - and believed they were a burden on the state and on other individuals. They introduced methods of so-called 'euthanasia' for this population, known as the 'T4 Programme' (named after Tiergartenstrasse 4, the address in Berlin from where the programme was co-ordinated). You can find out more about the persecution of people with 'disabilities' on the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's resources pages](#), including the life stories of various individuals.

George Vulkan's testimony on **RESOURCE SHEET 5** also addresses the fate of those labelled 'disabled' by the Nazis - in this case, his auntie's brother. This testimony extract will help young people to reflect on the difficult decisions some people were forced to make if they had caring responsibilities for relatives with additional needs.

? How can you celebrate difference at Holocaust-related sites?

It is important to celebrate the diversity of the lives of the victims of Nazi oppression and it is important that your young people feel they can similarly celebrate their own diversity. You could do this by asking the group if there is anyone they might like to research whose testimony could be included during your site visit. This might be a member of a community they identify with themselves. It is important that they are able to volunteer freely to do so, or not, as they may feel self-conscious, or not be public yet about this aspect of their identity. You could also try to ensure that you are open to hearing different perspectives on the visit. For example, take time to encourage the group to focus on particular senses - pausing to focus on the soundscape at a site, or the textures of a tactile monument. This will help your young people to experience the site in different ways, as well as celebrating the particular ways in which some of them might engage with the world around them.

Throughout your planning and visit remember that the Nazis and their collaborators persecuted a diversity of people, and that even within each 'group' that they persecuted there existed a diversity of experiences and identities. Try to include several of these perspectives so that their different voices can be heard.

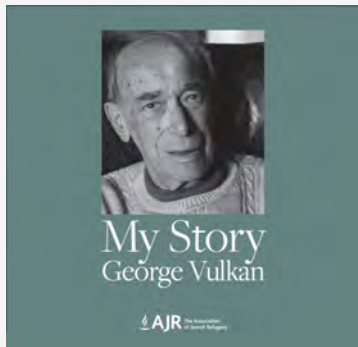
On **RESOURCE SHEET 6**, Manfred Goldberg talks about the diversity of victims of the Nazis and their collaborators, and how some camps were built specifically for certain groups (Polish prisoners in this case).

George remembers Uncle Leo's family in Germany...

George was born in Vienna in 1929. When Nazi Germany annexed Austria in 1938, things changed for George and his family and his parents realised it was no longer safe for them there. George escaped to England with his mother and father in 1939.

In this extract, George remembers the four months the family spent in Paris, on their way to safety in England. He recalls how his Uncle Leo returned to Nazi Germany to get his wife, mother-in-law, and his brother-in-law, who had additional needs.

"While we were in Paris my father's brother Leo, his business partner, joined us. It had been difficult for him but he managed to get out of Austria and they discussed us all going to England. Uncle Leo had heard that England would allow people in if they could give employment rather than need employment. In North East England there were lots of areas with very high unemployment and land was available for setting up businesses. So we decided to go to England. Uncle Leo, however, said that he had to return to Vienna first to bring his wife who he had left behind. My



father told him not to go as he might not be able to get out again. However Leo, who had fought for Germany in the First World War as a fighter on the Italian front and had been awarded a medal, said that he had been guaranteed safety and that we should not worry. He also said that his wife would not leave without her mother and her disabled brother, so he went back for them.

In November 1938 there was the infamous Kristallnacht and things became very much worse for Jews in Germany and Austria.

We stayed in Paris until February 1939 when my father said that we would leave for England and he fully expected Leo to follow, but we never saw him again. He, his wife, mother-in-law and brother-in-law were all murdered in the Shoah".

Extract from 'My Story - George Vulkan' (p18).

Manfred remembers how Stutthof concentration camp was initially built for Polish prisoners...

Manfred was born in Germany. He was deported to the Riga Ghetto in Latvia, before being moved to Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig (Gdańsk). He was forced to work as a slave labourer in the Riga Ghetto and at Stutthof. When Stutthof was abandoned, he was sent on a 'death march' with other prisoners, before being liberated in Neustadt in Germany on 3rd May 1945. He came to England in September 1946.

In this extract, Manfred talks about his time in Stutthof concentration camp. His testimony reminds us that some camps (like Stutthof) were established not for Jewish prisoners but for Polish prisoners (and other groups). Some of these camps didn't have Jewish prisoners for a long time. As time went on, however, the Nazis and their collaborators became more intent on murdering all Jewish people and started to expand camps to take larger numbers of these prisoners. Manfred was sent to the camp during the Nazis' evacuation of Jews from the Baltic States (he was in Riga in Latvia). He was sent to the camp to work as a slave labourer.

"Stutthof was one of the early camps opened in 1939. There were no Jewish prisoners there during the first couple of years..."

It was quite a small camp with a maximum capacity of 8,000 people, but in late 1942 they built an enormous extension, probably using the inmates to do the work. They moved the fence and built new barracks...

Then they began sending trainloads of Jews there".

Extract from 'My Story - Manfred Goldberg' (p31).



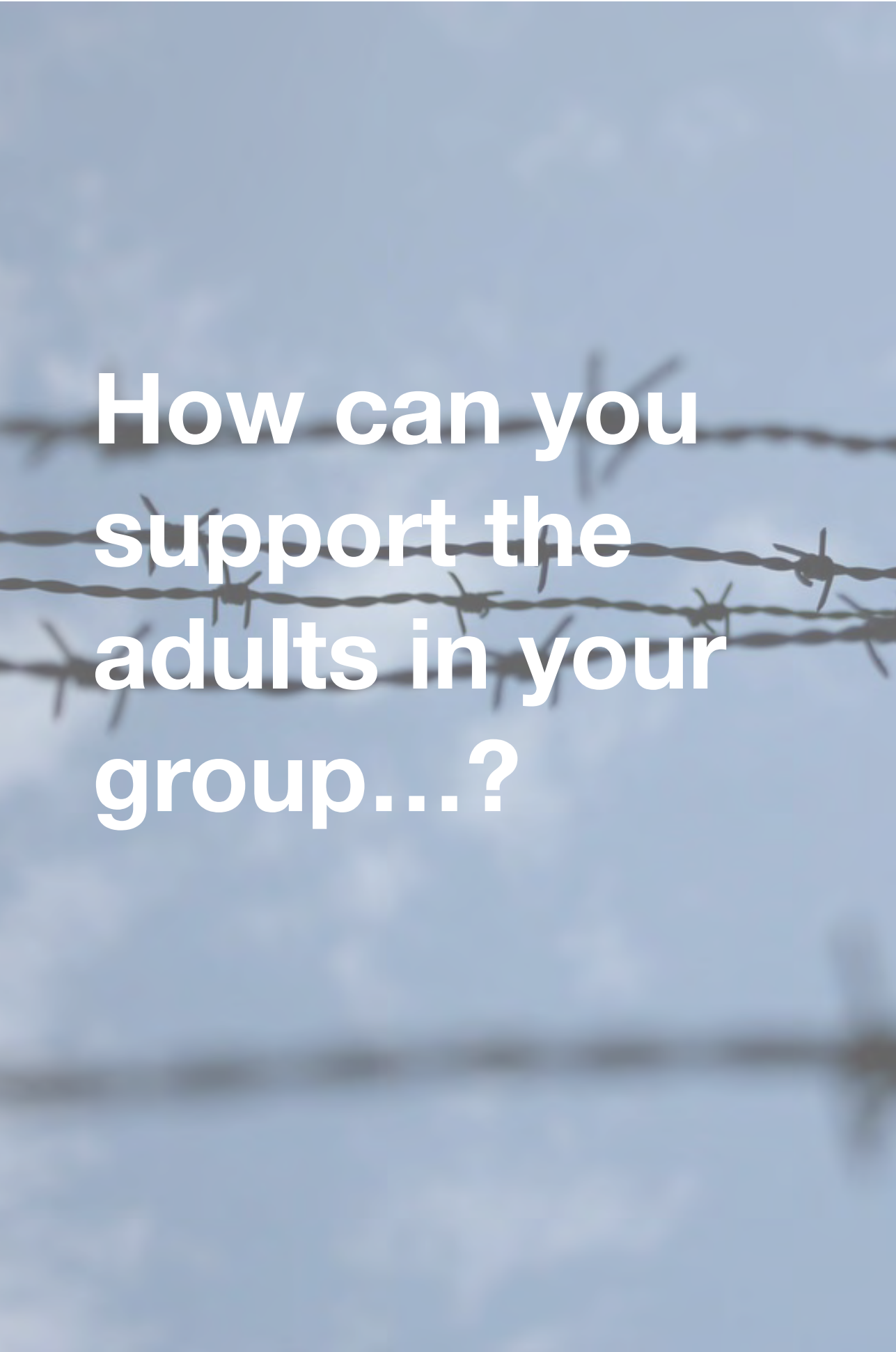


Checklist

- ☐ Have you considered the diversity of your group (including any additional needs) and how this might affect their visit?
- ☐ Have you included diverse stories or diverse victim-experiences in your itinerary?
- ☐ How else are you going to support the diversity of your group?

- ☐ Have you considered access to the Holocaust-related sites on your itinerary?
- ☐ What alternative learning experiences do you plan to offer young people who are unable to access certain areas or objects / artefacts?

Notes



**How can you
support the
adults in your
group...?**

What about us...?

supporting the adults who are accompanying your group

It is easy to forget that the adults accompanying your young people are also participants within the group too. It is important that the adults spend some time with each other to reflect on their various reasons for visiting, how they think they might react to the sites, and to think about how they can support each other during your visit.

How are the adults visiting the sites?

The adults in your group will have a variety of reasons for deciding to join your group and for visiting the Holocaust-related site(s) you are going to. Their reasons might mirror those of the young people - such as having an interest in the history of the Holocaust, or having a family connection to the events of the Holocaust. They might also be an 'accidental' visitor - someone who has volunteered to join your group to be helpful, without having really thought about the nature of the visit. Whatever their reasons, it is important that they are able to reflect on **why** they are visiting, and **how** they will visit the site(s).

Like the young people in your group, the adults might be visiting as historians, as pilgrims, as casual tourists, or for another reason, or combination of reasons. It is helpful to acknowledge this as a starting position - as a group you should spend some time considering the following questions / discussion starters:

- ▶ why do you want to join this visit?
- ▶ why are you interested in Holocaust-related sites?
- ▶ what are your motivations - are they purely academic, personal, or both?

Feeding back to each other, you can see if there are similarities or differences between the adults, or if there are any motivations that perhaps some people had not thought about before, or perhaps not properly addressed yet. As with the young people, remind the adults that their visit will be part of a much longer process of coming to terms with the sites and better understanding the events of the Holocaust.

Thinking about their visit as 'emotional labour'

Visiting a Holocaust-related site will be emotionally challenging for the adults in your group. As well as the challenging nature of the content they will see, they will also have responsibilities for the young people in their care. The need to be 'professional' when you are in charge of young people can exacerbate the emotional demands of a visit to a Holocaust-related site - this is known as 'emotional labour'. Emotional labour is the effort required to maintain a professional demeanour in emotionally complex situations. The adults in your group may not have thought about this additional layer of demand that will be placed on them. To understand this, it might be helpful for them to think about someone working in Customer Services, as an example. People in these jobs need to remain professional whilst dealing with even the most difficult or angry of customers. In the same way, they might feel they need to remain detached and unemotional at the sites they are going to visit to maintain their professional role as a 'leader' or 'teacher'. It is important to challenge this - impress on them that it is okay for adults to show their feelings at these difficult sites and that modelling healthy emotional responses can actually be hugely beneficial for the young people they are accompanying.

To start to explore this with the adults, you could spend some time considering the following questions / discussion starters together or in pairs:

- ▶ how do you think you might feel at the site(s)?
- ▶ what do you think you might need to do to emotionally cope with the site(s)?
- ▶ how do you feel about potentially getting upset in front of the rest of the group?
- ▶ who can support you during your visit?
- ▶ how can you support the young people and each other in your group?

The adults accompanying your group should not underestimate the potential emotional toll the visit might take on them (combined with potentially long days and lots of travel). The impact on them might be immediate, or over a longer period of time (often people speak about aspects of a visit 'hitting them' later on, after they return).



Seeing educators in the narratives of the Holocaust

We have thought about how the young people in your group might 'see themselves' reflected at the sites you visit, and this is also true for the adults accompanying them. As adults, they might have a more developed sense of their own identities (or not), so it might be beneficial to spend some time thinking about this with them before your visit. You can do this by including a diverse range of experiences and different testimonies, as we have already considered. You could also think about the role that educators and schools in particular played in the events of the Holocaust - to help the adults in your group to think a little more about their perspectives as educators and leaders themselves.

When the Nazis seized power the anti-Jewish laws they introduced impacted education in several ways. For example, the laws led to Jewish children being outcast by many of their non-Jewish friends, they led to the sacking of Jewish teachers, and to the closure of Jewish schools. Eventually, all Jewish people were removed from public schools and universities, whether they were students, teachers, administrators, or other support staff. For students this meant significant disruption to their education, while for staff this meant a loss of income, status, and opportunities for career progression. Many non-Jewish teachers were complicit in supporting these anti-Jewish measures. They taught pseudo-scientific Nazi racial theories in schools, and perpetuated anti-Jewish stereotypes. Others defied the Nazis and their collaborators by continuing to provide an education or safety for their students. You can find out more about [Teachers who rescued Jews during the Holocaust](#) on the Yad Vashem website.

There are many stories of clandestine learning continuing in concentration camps. For example, 'Professor' Valtr Eisinger supervised the makeshift school in Barrack L417 (known as

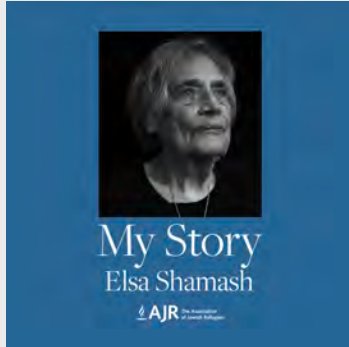
'Home One') in the Theresienstadt transit camp (you can find out more about the history of the camp on the [Terezin Memorial](#) website).

Perhaps the most famous of these educators is **Janusz Korczak** - a prolific educator who founded an orphanage in Warsaw. Before the war he was a well-known author who had written extensively about pedagogy, and children's rights in particular. He believed in social justice and the pivotal role education could play in helping every child become a happy and fulfilled member of society. When the Nazis invaded Poland, Korczak chose to stay in his orphanage building inside the Warsaw Ghetto, instead of moving to another of his buildings in a safer area. He was committed to staying where he felt the need was greatest - with the children inside the ghetto walls. He refused offers to be smuggled out of the ghetto to safety, instead choosing to lead his children calmly to the trains when they were called to be deported. Upon arrival at Treblinka extermination camp, Janusz Korczak was murdered almost immediately, alongside his children. Korczak's story shows us how some educators put their duty of care before their own safety. The picture (on the following page) shows his symbolic grave in the Okopowa Street Jewish Cemetery in Warsaw. The sculpture, created by Mieczysław Smorczewski, shows Korczak leading his children from the ghetto to the trains. You can find out more about him on the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust](#) website.

The different ways in which teachers, educators, and others in positions of responsibility reacted during the Holocaust raise many issues for us as adults accompanying visits to Holocaust-related sites. You could share the testimony extracts on **RESOURCE SHEETS 7 & 8** with the adults in your group to consider some of these issues together, further.

You might also like to explore some of the other biographies in the AJR My Story archive since many of the authors went on to become teachers after they arrived in the UK as refugees. These include Elsa Shamash, Eva Lorimer, and Gabriele Keenaghan BEM - who became a Headteacher and was followed by her daughter and granddaughter into the profession!





"Life started to be really different from 1933. I was just five years old. Later, I learned that the Nazis had started to pass laws discriminating against Jews.

In 1936, my brother was due to go to a well-known secondary school, the Koelnische Gymnasium, which our father had attended. My mother went to talk to the headmaster who said: "We'll take him but I cannot protect him from the boys or the staff." So obviously, my mother couldn't send him there, especially as he was quite meek and a dreamer. By 15 October 1936, just one month after my mother visited the school, the Reich Ministry of Education banned Jewish teachers from state schools and by April 1937, Jewish children were not allowed to attend state schools".

Extract from 'My Story - Elsa Shamash' (p21&24).

"I was the only Jewish child in my class of around 30. I had some nice friends, but there were others whose attitude changed over time due to their families' political views. At first, the teacher treated me like any teacher would treat their pupils today, but once the Nazis arrived, I was discriminated against and made to feel inferior.

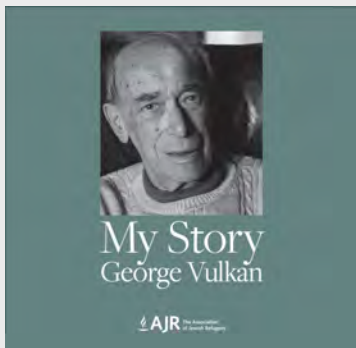
I was aware, though, of the terrible position my teacher was in. Under the Nazis, people had to follow orders. If they didn't, they were killed. It's understandable that they kept their heads down and did as they were told".

Extract from 'My Story - Frank Leigh' (p18).



"The teachers were very prejudiced against the Jewish children, and did nothing to stop the other children tearing up the Jewish children's school books".

Extract from 'My Story - Dina LeBoutillier' (p13).



"A few weeks later I arrived at school one morning to be told that I had been expelled, not because of what I had done but because of what I was, and from then on I had to go to a Jewish school. This was some distance away and in a not very nice building but we had good teachers who were all Jewish and had been removed from their jobs in state schools.

We continued with our normal lessons. The problem was that every time we finished school there would be a crowd of Hitler Youths outside in uniform – white shirts and brown belts and swastika armbands, waiting for us. They were very well organised and older than us. I think that we were only between six and 12

years old. They threw stones and rotten fruit. Each time they would grab a few of us and beat us up. There would be a couple of Austrian police standing there laughing and making sure that we didn't throw anything back.

One day we saw a patrol of German soldiers coming around the corner and I was terrified. The soldiers, however, saw what was happening and shouted at the police for not stopping it. They chased away the Hitler Youth and came over to us, patted us on the shoulders and said that they would not allow this to happen to us again. These were a small minority who were still decent but they were the exception. However, the attacks didn't happen again and we were able to go home normally".

Extract from 'My Story - George Vulkan' (p14).



Checklist

- ☐ Have you built in time for you and the other adults accompanying your group to reflect on your motivations and expectations before the visit?
- ☐ Have you built in time for reflection with the other adults accompanying your group during your visit?
- ☐ Is there anything else you need to consider about the other adults accompanying your group?

Notes



Some final thoughts before your visit...

why young people might feel anxious before a site visit

So far you have had the opportunity to reflect on many different aspects of planning your visit. Before we come to some practical resources, It's worth pausing to think about some of the many different reasons why the young people in your group might be feeling anxious about your upcoming visit...



How might your group be feeling about the visit?

It's important that young people see that we recognise any fears or concerns they might have before their visit. These might not be directly connected with the site itself - they might be worried about staying away from home, air travel, unfamiliar accommodation or food, for example. While such worries can be allayed through reassurances and by providing detailed itineraries and information, they can also elevate concerns they might have about the site(s) they are going to visit. Others might not have any concerns before they travel - and we don't want to cause

them to worry unnecessarily, of course - but they do need to be prepared for unexpected emotions they might encounter during their site visit. It is very common for young people to have strong emotional reactions at these sites. Often, these emotions take them by surprise (such as feeling angry at the inhumanity of perpetrators, for example, when confronted with the evidence of their crimes). If they were not expecting to feel that way, this can be very confusing for them. Any emotional reaction to a site is often only the beginning of a long process - how they feel about the space(s) they have visited might stay with them for many years to come.

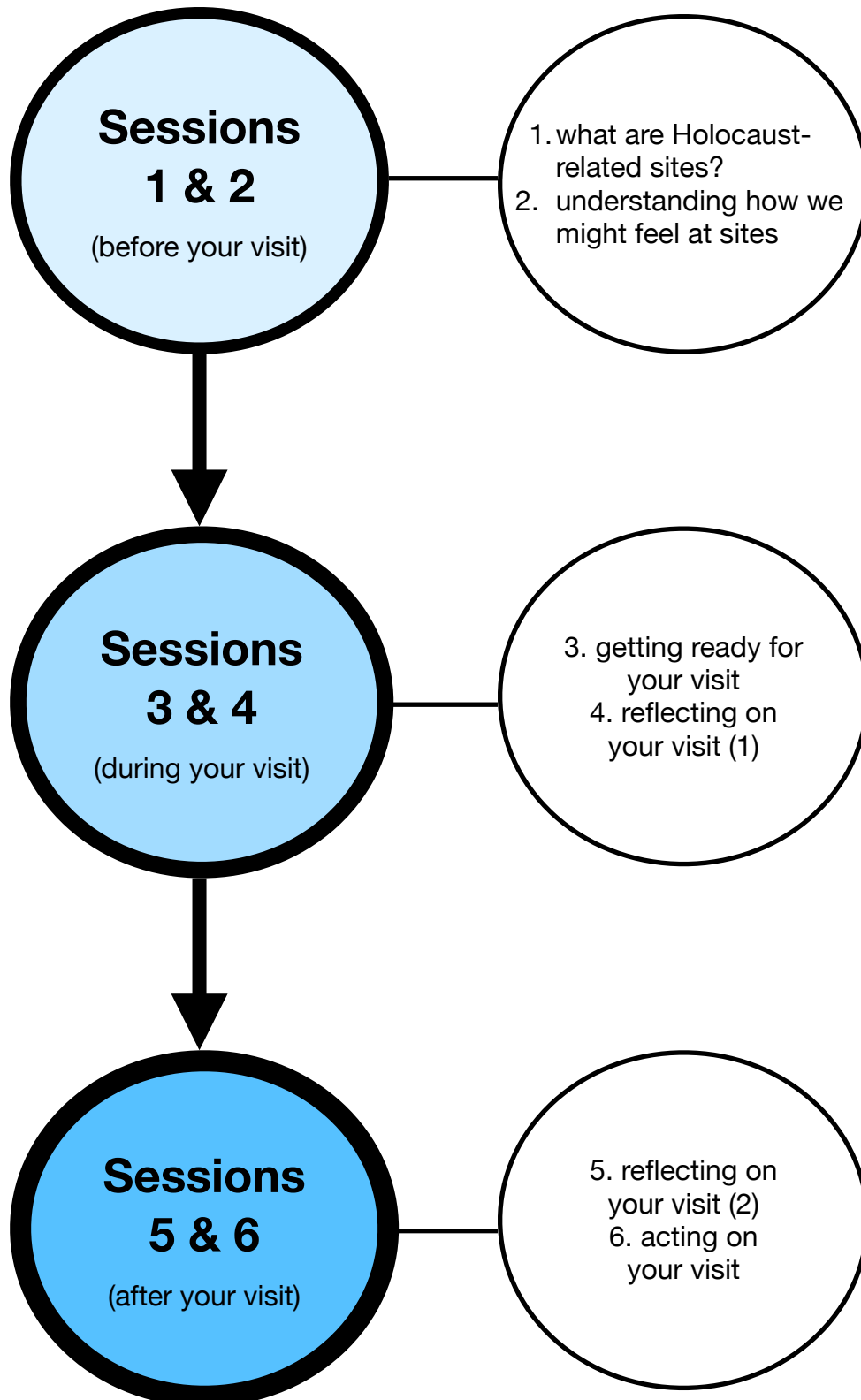
The resources that follow will help you prepare them for their visit and help them to consider how they can manage their emotions and learning in the coming weeks.

The next page provides an overview of the sessions in the next three sections of this resource...



Supporting young people during visits to Holocaust-related sites

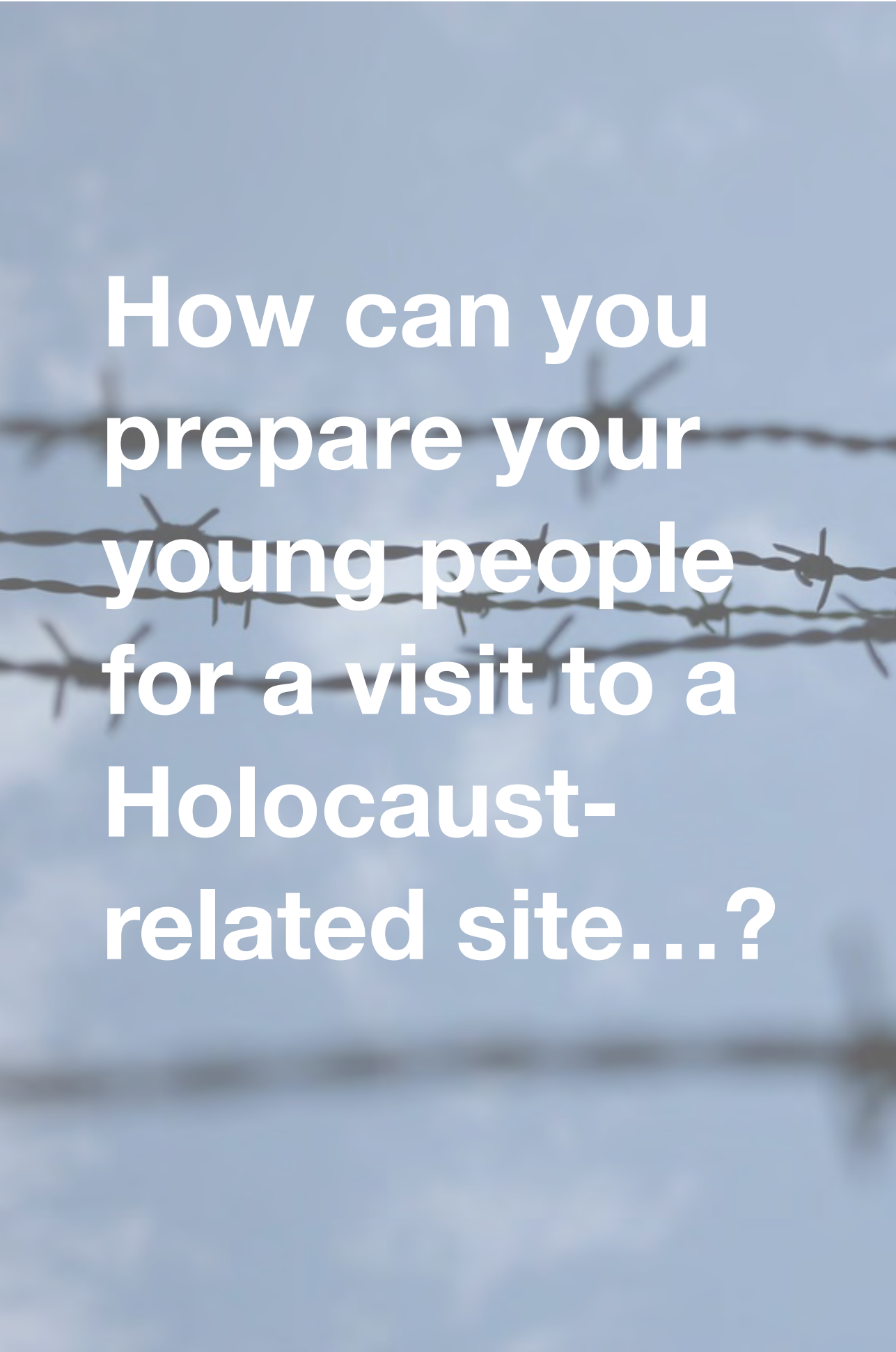
Sessions overview





section two

**resources:
before your visit**



**How can you
prepare your
young people
for a visit to a
Holocaust-
related site...?**

Session 1: what are Holocaust-related sites?

Aims:

1. to welcome the group and establish ground-rules with them
2. to establish a clear definition of the Holocaust
3. to consider their preconceptions about Holocaust-related sites
4. to think about why people visit Holocaust-related sites
5. to consider their expectations of visiting the site(s).

Preparation:

You will need the accompanying PowerPoint **SLIDES 3-16** (on screen, or printed out for the group). Sticky notes / flip chart paper & pens will be useful too.

Time:

45-60 minutes, depending on your group. There is quite a lot to cover, so you might consider splitting this into two shorter sessions.

1. Welcome & setting ground-rules

Welcome the group and tell them that you are going to be spending some time thinking about and preparing for your visit to a Holocaust-related site. You might like to do an icebreaker activity, particularly if the group are not used to being together - for example, if the young people come from different year groups in a school. Then establish some shared ground-rules. These might include being respectful of each other / listening to each other's views, etc.

SLIDE 3 will help you share the overall aims of this session with the group.

2. Defining the Holocaust

If they are going to visit a Holocaust-related site it is essential the young people know what the Holocaust was. Begin by writing / displaying the words 'The Holocaust' clearly for the group to see and ask them to spend a few minutes in small groups discussing what these words mean to them, before feeding back to the whole group.

SLIDE 4 shows the word 'Holocaust' and the alternative 'Shoah' (the Hebrew word considered by many Jewish people to be more accurate).

Young people who have studied the events of the Holocaust in school (usually by the age of 13-14) should be able to identify the key facts of

the Holocaust (although they might have forgotten, so this activity is a useful reminder for them). They are likely to still have misconceptions, which need to be addressed and corrected before your visit. There is no single definition of the Holocaust, however it is important that young people know the Holocaust refers to:

the attempt by Nazi Germany and its collaborators to murder the Jews of Europe.

This definition is on **SLIDE 5**. It's important to note there were other victim groups (such as Jehovah's Witnesses, gay men, and Roma & Sinti people), but these people are not victims of the Holocaust - they are victims of other specific forms of Nazi Persecution, the nature of which deserves to be studied separately (instead of insensitively and inaccurately putting all victims together).

By discussing these important distinctions, your group will be able to better understand the site(s) they are going to visit and the experiences of different victim groups there. You could talk to them about some of these experiences now - for example, how Polish political prisoners were treated at Auschwitz I, and how that is similar and different to how Jewish prisoners were treated at Auschwitz II Birkenau.

As an example, you could share with them this speech that several survivors have recalled - SS-Hauptsturmführer (the camp compound leader) Karl Fritzsche would greet each new group of prisoners upon arrival by telling them that:

“if there are Jews in the transport, they have the right to live no longer than two weeks, priests - a month, others - three months”

This illustrates how different groups were treated differently within the camp hierarchy by the Nazis and their collaborators - and how we must consider these groups individually and specifically.

Further information and discussion about defining the Holocaust can be found on the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust](#) website.

3. Holocaust sites - what are they like?

Show your group the image on **SLIDE 6** and ask them to discuss it in small groups (the picture is intentionally generic and unidentifiable). You could provide the following prompts (on **SLIDE 7**) to help them:

- ▶ what can you see in the photograph?
- ▶ where do you think the photograph was taken?
- ▶ is the photograph old, or contemporary (recent)?
- ▶ why is there a star in the image?
- ▶ why is the metal jagged?
- ▶ what do you think is in the background (and beyond)?

The young people could discuss this in their small groups or pairs, then feedback. Hopefully their responses will show that they have some understanding of concentration camps and the imagery connected with the persecution of Jewish people, but they might not and might need further prompting or support with this.

Once they have fed back, you can tell them that the image shows a detail from a gate at the site of the former Nazi concentration camp at Dachau. It is a contemporary photo - taken at the memorial site on the grounds of the former concentration camp. You might want to draw out the following features from the image:

- ▶ the heavy metal fence was fashioned to look like barbed wire to be intimidating
- ▶ the incorporation of the Star of David (as a symbol of Judaism) further served to intimidate Jewish prisoners in particular. The Star of David emphasises our shared definition of the Holocaust (**SLIDE 5**) as an attack specifically on Jewish people (although other persecuted groups were also sent to Dachau, particularly Catholic priests, for example).

SLIDE 8 provides some further information about Dachau (from the [Dachau Memorial](#) website) and shows a guard tower at the modern-day museum.

If you have asked them the last question on **SLIDE 7** ('what do you think is in the background (and beyond)?') your young people will probably have offered some suggestions about what lies 'behind' this image. You could prompt them by asking questions like 'what do you think this is a fence around?' Or 'what is behind the fence?' They might have learned about concentration camps in school, or from

books or films. They should be clear about the difference between (1) concentration camps (such as Dachau) - which were part of a network of hundreds of camps of various sizes across Europe that were designed to imprison, intimidate and isolate various victim groups and (2) extermination camps (such as Treblinka and Majdanek) - which were established to systematically murder people (mainly Jews) quickly upon arrival. Only the camps at Auschwitz Birkenau and Majdanek served both purposes. **SLIDE 9** might help in this explanation by displaying the words clearly.

It is important they understand that camps varied enormously in size and construction (some examples follow on the PowerPoint). Some were repurposed buildings (such as Auschwitz I), others were purpose-built (such as Auschwitz II Birkenau). Some were 'model' camps (such as Sachsenhausen), some were established as early as 1933 (such as Dachau), while others were established during the war (such as Płaszów in Kraków), and others were transit camps (such as Theresienstadt near Prague). Understanding this complexity is a good thing - the Holocaust is a complex topic and young people need to know there are few simple answers. Whichever site(s) they are going to visit, they will be both similar and different to other sites.

You can share **SLIDE 10** with your group to illustrate this. The slide shows how the site of the former camp at Auschwitz I (right) is a brick-built former Polish army training facility, while the site of the former Majdanek concentration camp (left) consisted largely of purpose-built, temporary wooden 'barracks' built in fields.



4. Visiting Holocaust-related sites

The young people in your group might not have thought much about their expectations of their upcoming visit. This is a good opportunity to spend some time reflecting on **why** they want to visit and **how they might feel** when they do. As this might be difficult for the young people to talk about (particularly about their feelings), it might be helpful to depersonalise the discussion - to think about why 'people' might visit, or how 'people' might feel (rather than how 'you' might feel).

In small groups, ask them to think about why people might want to visit Holocaust-related sites (**SLIDE 11** could be used as a prompt). They could write down their thoughts on sticky notes, which could be shared on flip chart paper in their groups, or on a wall space for the whole group to share. With this type of activity it can also be helpful for each small group to swap their sticky notes with another group so they can see what others have said anonymously - and to discuss similarities / differences with their own responses. You could then ask the group to feedback some of the reasons they have come up with. Look to see if there are any common themes among their responses, for example:

- ▶ an interest in history?
- ▶ to learn more?
- ▶ to remember the victims.
- ▶ a personal / family reason (such as having family who were at the site during the war)?
- ▶ to experience 'what it was like' at the site?

You could share some of these common reasons, if they haven't already come up. The first three responses (above) are straightforward to understand and discuss - lots of people visit these sites to learn more about the past and to memorialise the victims. However, the last two are more complex and will need some further discussion with your group. Some people (and possibly some in your group) have personal / family reasons for visiting. While they might be happy to talk about these in front of the group, it is perhaps best to talk first in the abstract so no-one feels uncomfortable. You could begin by saying, "some people who visit these sites have family connections with the Holocaust - can anyone think why they might want to visit?" This way, the group can start to think about how they might need to be sensitive to such visitors.

The final reason should be addressed directly - we cannot 'experience' a site as the victims did. It is important your group understand that visiting a contemporary site is not (and can never be) the same as experiencing the historical site (because it no longer exists). What they should hope to get from the site is a better understanding of the experiences of its victims.

5. Expectations

Your group will already know where they are going, but probably will not know exactly what they are going to see. When visiting places that will potentially be emotionally challenging it is important to prepare them for the visit and to avoid surprising them with sites they were not expecting. You can begin a discussion about their expectations with the question on **SLIDE 12** - 'what are you expecting to see at the site?' Give them some time to discuss this question in their small groups again, using sticky notes or flip chart paper to gather their discussions together.

Bring the whole group back together and invite the small groups to feedback (or share their sticky notes / flip chart papers if they are happy to). You can then lead a discussion about the common themes that have emerged, or any particular specific expectations. You can follow up by asking them 'why' they have these expectations - where have they come from? Their expectations might include what they are expecting to **see** (for example, prison blocks or crematoria), and what they expect to **feel** or the **atmosphere** (for example, feelings of 'coldness' or 'eeriness' at the site are common expectations). They might also have heard common **misconceptions** (such as the belief that 'no birds sing at Auschwitz') and it is important to challenge these: the site you visit might be very busy (not quiet or 'eerie' at all), it might be very empty (particularly if the original buildings have not survived), and it might be a beautiful, hot, and sunny day when you visit. Young people can find all of these things quite disorientating as they go against their expectations. You could share **SLIDE 13** to help begin a discussion about this - the images show the site of the former Nazi concentration camp at Dachau in the snow (left), and the site of Auschwitz II Birkenau in the sunshine (right).

Having thought about their expectations, you could share with them some images of the actual sites you are planning to visit. Including some maps of the sites or the wider geographical area might help them to prepare for their upcoming visit. **SLIDE 14** gives some examples for a visit to the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum as an example. The slide shows the Guard Tower at the site of Auschwitz II Birkenau (far left), a display of suitcases and baskets looted from victims of Auschwitz I (middle), the 'Arbeit Macht Frei' gate (top right), and a walkway between the blocks at Auschwitz I (bottom right).

On **SLIDE 15** you can insert a map of the site(s) you are visiting (either a historical map from the time, or a contemporary map - these are often available from museum websites). Helping your group to understand the layout of the places they are going to visit will help to reduce their anxiety levels before and during their visit, and allow them to focus more on learning.

You can now draw the discussion together by recapping what they have achieved:

- ▶ we have got to know each other as a group before our visit
- ▶ we understand what the Holocaust was and how it is distinct from other forms of Nazi persecution
- ▶ we understand that there were different types of camps across Europe
- ▶ we understand some of the reasons why people might visit Holocaust-related sites
- ▶ we have thought about our own expectations of the site(s) we are going to visit
- ▶ we have looked at some pictures / maps of the sites we are going to visit.

SLIDE 16 can also help you to do this. Thank them for their time and participation today, before drawing the session to a close. Allow time for any further questions and signpost the group to members of your team who they can talk to if they have any more questions before your next session.



Session 2: understanding how we might feel at sites

Aims:

1. to consider how your group might feel at the Holocaust-related sites they are going to visit
2. to consider how your group can support each other during their visit.

Preparation:

You will need the accompanying PowerPoint **SLIDES 17-26** (on screen, or printed out for the group) and **RESOURCE SHEETS 9-14** printed out. Sticky notes / flip chart paper & pens might be useful too.

Time:

45-60 minutes

1. Welcoming & ground-rules

Welcome the group back and remind them of the ground-rules you agreed last time. Share the aims of the session with them (**SLIDE 17**) and reassure them that while this might be a challenging session, it will help them to prepare for their visit. Explain that it is normal to be apprehensive about a visit to a Holocaust-related site and remind them that there is no 'right' way to feel about it - different people will feel differently about their visit (as we started to discuss in the last session).

2. Feelings

Remind your group about the discussion you had in the last session about their expectations of visiting a Holocaust-related site. Explain to them that you are going to spend a bit more time thinking about how they might **feel** about their upcoming visit, and how understanding their feelings can help them to cope with them better before and during their visit. Reassure them that you are not taking them to the Holocaust-related site to upset them - while it might be emotionally challenging, your main aim is to help them **understand** and **learn** more about the Holocaust.

To help get them thinking about how they might feel during their visit, ask them the question on **SLIDE 18** ('how might people feel when they visit Holocaust-related sites?') - note how the question is depersonalised again: asking about 'people' rather than 'you'). They could discuss their responses to this question in pairs or small groups initially, noting down some of their thoughts on sticky notes or flip chart paper. They could then feedback to the whole group. Try to limit discussion at this point - simply gather together different 'feelings' that they think people might have.

Share the sorting cards on **RESOURCE SHEETS 9 & 10** (which are also on **SLIDE 19**) with them. On each sheet there are five emotions commonly experienced by visitors to Holocaust-related sites. The five on **RESOURCE SHEET 9** could be described as 'negative' emotional responses, while those on **RESOURCE SHEET 10** could be described as 'positive'. Give them some time in pairs or small groups to discuss each one - they can also add their own on the blank cards. Encourage them to think about **why** someone might feel each emotion at a Holocaust-related site. Give them plenty of time to discuss together before they feedback with the whole group. When they do, remind the young people that none of these is necessarily the 'right' way to react to a site - they are all okay.

The cards on **RESOURCE SHEET 11** (which are also on **SLIDE 20**) show some of the types of sites and objects they **might** encounter during their visit - such as original buildings, objects, or monuments. These could be used alongside the cards on **RESOURCE SHEETS 9 & 10** to help their discussion, or could be introduced separately, after their initial discussion. There is an explanation of all of the cards on the next pages, to help you lead this session.



The following explanations of all of the cards should help you discuss them with the young people in your group:

RESOURCE SHEET 9 / SLIDE 19

Visitors to Holocaust-related sites often feel 'negative' emotions because they are spaces where bad / sad things happened...

- ▶ **Sad** - it is important that your young people understand that it is perfectly 'normal' to feel sad at these sites. People might feel sad about what happened there and for the victims. They might see people get upset, look sad, or crying there.
- ▶ **Overwhelmed** - sometimes people feel overwhelmed by what they are seeing and hearing at Holocaust-related sites. Explain to them that processing these sites often takes a long time and that while they are at the site they might not know how or what they feel. It could put them in a state of cognitive dissonance (for example, questioning how human beings could perpetrate the Holocaust?). These are challenging questions and emotions and will take time to process.
- ▶ **Tired** - often, tiredness plays a part in what people feel at Holocaust-related sites. Like many visitors, they will probably have a busy schedule with long days and lots to see and this might affect how people feel.
- ▶ **Angry** - they may be surprised that people sometimes feel angry at Holocaust-related sites, but this is a fairly common response when learning about the inhumanity of perpetrators and bystanders. It is important that your young people realise this as it can often be an 'unexpected' reaction for them at sites.
- ▶ **Scared** - learning about persecution and genocide can be scary for anyone of any age. Visiting Holocaust-related sites can challenge people to realise that their safety is fragile. For young people this might be the first time they have felt like this. They should be aware that this might be exacerbated if people identify as Jewish, or with another persecuted or marginalised minority.

Impress on your young people that all of these emotions are okay and understandable. Ensure that they know you are there to support them and that they will be safe.

RESOURCE SHEET 10 / SLIDE 19

Visitors to Holocaust-related sites also often feel 'positive' emotions (which can sometimes come as a surprise)...

- ▶ **Happy** - it is okay *not* to feel sad at a Holocaust-related site. In fact it is really important that young people don't feel they *have* to feel a certain way (sad, miserable, etc.). They might - for example - feel 'happy' that the events that took place at the site are now in the past. If they have a personal connection to the site, they may feel 'happy' that they are there to bear witness. Visiting the site might be a long-held ambition, and they may just be happy to fulfil that.
- ▶ **Inspired** - stories of resistance and survival can be inspirational at Holocaust-related sites. Visitors might feel inspired by these stories, or inspired to remember them and bear witness.
- ▶ **Grateful** - visitors to Holocaust-related sites often feel grateful for a number of reasons. Perhaps they are grateful that they can visit, that the Holocaust-era is past, or that their family members survived.
- ▶ **Interested** - many visitors to Holocaust-related sites go there because they have a curiosity about the events of the past. They want to learn more and see the sites for themselves. This is perhaps the most common motivation for visiting - to find out more about the Holocaust.
- ▶ **Proud** - this can be a complicated emotion and might be bound up in a visitor's identities. For example, they might feel pride as a Jewish person (or member of another persecuted group) that they are there to bear witness to those who were persecuted and murdered. They might feel a pride in their nation for its role in fighting the Nazis and their collaborators, or for a relative who was a liberator or rescuer, for example.

RESOURCE SHEET 11 / SLIDE 20

These images show **three** types of physical objects your group might encounter at Holocaust-related sites.

1. Authentic Holocaust-era structures, and buildings.

- ▶ **Cattle Wagon** - goods / cattle wagons were used to transport victims across Europe to / from concentration and extermination camps. Authentic goods wagons are often displayed at sites (or inside museums) to illustrate the terrible conditions people were held in, and the inhuman ways in which they were treated. It can be emotionally challenging for visitors to encounter these exhibits 'up close'.
- ▶ **Guard Tower** - sites of former concentration or extermination camps often have original structures such as buildings, barracks, or guard towers. These structures challenge us to 'see' the camp as it might have been - they populate the 'space' and thereby contribute to people's sense of 'place' within it.
- ➡ *It is important to note that at some Holocaust-related sites, structures such as wagons and guard towers might be reconstructions (or authentic objects brought there from other locations). Your guide (if you have one) will be able to advise you.*

2. Material evidence of the crimes of the Holocaust.

- ▶ **Human remains** - the picture shows the mausoleum at the site of the former Nazi concentration camp at Majdanek (near the city of Lublin in the south of Poland). Inside the mausoleum, visitors can view a huge mound of mixed-up human ash (which had been found across 15 locations in the former camp). The mound was created in 1947, with the mausoleum added in 1969. The display of human remains can be extremely emotionally challenging for visitors. The inscription on the monument reads 'Let our fate be a warning to you' - again emotively challenging the visitor to respond.
- ▶ **Victims' belongings** - the picture shows a display of suitcases and baskets stolen from victims of Auschwitz Birkenau. Objects - such as shoes, spectacles, or photographs - tell us so much about their former owners. In many ways they are like testimony - they tell the story of their owner. It is not uncommon for people to 'connect' with individual objects as a way of **re**humanising the victims.
- ➡ *The display of human remains raises several ethical questions for us as educators. At some*

sites (such as at the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum) these displays take the form of urns of ash, or displays of the hair of victims. At many others there are clearly human remains in the ground (such as at sites of mass executions, or near the sites of crematoria at former camps). You will have to decide whether you are comfortable with your young people seeing such displays - again, you should discuss this with your guide if you have one. You should also ensure no member of your group is forced to see these exhibits if they do not want to. Also ensure you allow time to reflect on them after your visit.

3. Memorials and monuments.

- ▶ **Stolpersteine** - the picture shows a 'Stolpersteine' or 'stumbling block' (a project by the artist  [Gunter Deming](#)). These small metal blocks are laid into the ground outside (or near) the former homes of Holocaust victims. They mark where they lived, where they were deported to, and their ultimate fate. In this picture, the Stolpersteine is for Edith Stein. She was a German Jewish woman who converted to Catholicism in her thirties. She became a teacher and Carmelite nun (this Stolpersteine marks the religious house where she made her vows). Despite her declared Catholic faith, she was subject to Nazi anti-Jewish laws like anyone else born Jewish, and she was ultimately arrested and deported to Auschwitz Birkenau where she was murdered in 1942.
- ▶ **Shoes** - the picture shows one of the sixty-six iron-made shoes on the bank of the River Danube in Budapest. Known as 'The Shoes on the Danube Promenade', the memorial shows models of adults' and children's shoes in the fashions of the 1940s. Shoes are an iconic image of the Holocaust and are often represented in memorials and museums. These shoes memorialise the Hungarian Jews who were shot on the river bank in the winter of 1944-45 by members of the Arrow Cross Party (Hungarian Fascist Party).
- ➡ *Memorials serve a number of purposes and young people will interact with them in various ways. Some memorials are particularly emotive (such as the children's shoes by the Danube), some focus on individuals (such as the Stolpersteine), while others are much bigger in scale (such as the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin). You should encourage the young people in your group to think about what the memorial is (its form) as well as why it is there (its function), and whether it is on a Holocaust-related site, or placed elsewhere to memorialise something that didn't happen there.*

sad

overwhelmed

tired

angry

scared

happy

inspired

grateful

interested

proud

RESOURCE SHEET 11



3. Including individuals

The young people in your group have now spent some time thinking about how and why people visit Holocaust-related sites, the different emotions people experience at them, and what they might see there. To finish this session, tell them that you are going to return to focus on survivors and their testimony.

Remind them that in the first session you discussed a definition of the Holocaust. Impress on them how the story of the Holocaust is the story of millions of people - we can never hope to hear them all, but we can hear the testimony of *individuals*. You might find the image on **SLIDE 21** helpful to explain this - amongst many, many individual experiences, we will try to pick up a few **individual threads** (individual's stories) to help us better understand what happened.

To draw this session to a close, share with your group the testimony on **RESOURCE SHEET 12** ('Manfred returns to Stutthof'). In this extract, Manfred Goldberg talks about his apprehension at returning to the site of the former concentration camp at Stutthof. You can ask your group to read the extract in small groups or pairs, or share it with them as a whole group yourself (Manfred's picture can be shared on **SLIDE 22** - which shows the cover of his 'My Story' book from which the text is taken).

When you have read the text, discuss some of the key points with your young people:

- ▶ how did Manfred feel about returning to Stutthof? Why do you think he felt that way?
- ▶ why did he return, despite his fears?
- ▶ what did the Holocaust Educational Trust do to help him cope with visiting the site?
- ▶ what differences does Manfred think there are between the camp he was imprisoned in,

and the site today? Why does he think it is different?

- ▶ why is there a (Christian) cross at the site?

These questions and this testimony will help reiterate to your young people that sites are complex places and that all visitors struggle with emotions when they visit them (and so might they when they go).

Manfred was determined to visit the site because he had a **purpose** - to educate others (in person, and through media coverage of the Royals' visit, for example). Now that they have thought about their expectations and feelings about their upcoming visit, you could ask your young people to think about what **their purpose** for visiting a Holocaust-related site is. You could ask some of them to articulate this (or not), but remind them that it is okay to have *similar* or *different* purposes to each other.

A second testimony extract is included on **RESOURCE SHEET 13** ('Mindhu returns to Auschwitz'). Mindhu's testimony could be read alongside Manfred's (if you have time) to further explore and illustrate the experiences of survivors who have made the difficult decision to return to the sites of former camps. Particularly, Mindhu's comment that the site "looks so different now" will help to reinforce to your young people that they are not visiting the same place that the victims experienced.

Mindhu's picture can be shared on **SLIDE 23** - which shows the cover of her 'My Story' book from which the text is taken.

Mindhu felt able to return because of the support she had around her - this will help you to remind your group that they have support around them too.



*Note: when thinking about the purpose of their visit, some of your young people might begin to articulate a hope that they can **do something** to remember the victims of the Holocaust after they return. This is something we will return to in the 'afterwards' activities section (Section 4).*

Manfred returns to Stutthof...

Manfred was born in Germany. He was deported to the Riga Ghetto in Latvia with his mother and younger brother. Eventually, he was moved to Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig (Gdańsk). He was forced to work as a slave labourer in the Riga Ghetto and at Stutthof. When Stutthof was abandoned, he was sent on a 'death march' with other prisoners, before being liberated in Neustadt in Germany on 3rd May 1945. He came to England in September 1946.

In this extract, Manfred talks about being asked to return to the site of the former concentration camp at Stutthof with his friend Ziggy Shipper (who also survived the camp with Manfred as a teenager). Manfred and Ziggy had been asked to accompany the Duke & Duchess of Cambridge (now the Prince & Princess of Wales) on a visit to the camp. Manfred talks about his apprehension at returning, the need to prepare himself for the visit, the state of the museum at the former camp, the memorials there, and conditions at the camp.

"For more than 70 years I did not return to any of the camps. I never set foot in either Germany, Poland or Lithuania until the summer of 2017, when the Holocaust Educational Trust asked me and my friend, Ziggy Shipper, to go back to Stutthof..."

The decision to return was agonising. The experience was very traumatic. HET [The Holocaust Educational Trust] took us to Stutthof the day before the Royal visit so that if we felt too overwhelmed, we would get it out of our system and, by the next day, we would be able to remain more composed. And that's more or less what happened.

There was such poverty in post-war Poland that the wooden barracks were slowly but methodically dismantled. The Poles used the wood for firewood to keep themselves warm. That's how 80% of the camp disappeared before the Government decided to preserve Stutthof. They are now protecting the remaining 20% of the camp and six barracks have been turned into a walkthrough museum....

There are two memorials, both close to the gas chamber. On one side there's an enormous cross, because many non-Jewish people died...

When prisoners became very weak they were often taken aside and given lethal injections or sent in groups to the gas chamber".

Extract from 'My Story - Manfred Goldberg' (p90).



Mindhu returns to Auschwitz...

Mindhu was born in Czechoslovakia. Her family were forced to live in a ghetto before they were sent to Auschwitz. She was liberated after months of slave labour at the camp. Mindhu was eventually able to come to England in 1948 to live with her uncle and his family.

In this extract, Mindhu talks about her first visit back to the site of the former concentration and extermination camp at Auschwitz Birkenau. She talks about how the museum (in 2014) was different from the camp (70 years before) and she describes how emotionally difficult it was for her to return - both during her visit and afterwards.



"I first returned to Auschwitz in 2014. Rabbi Jacobs from Singers Hill Synagogue asked if I would accompany a group of shul [synagogue] members. I was hesitant, but I had been watching programmes of memorial events and also enough time had elapsed that I felt I could cope with it, so I said yes. I am very grateful to Rabbi Jacobs and the social and community support, because I don't think I would have had the courage to do it on my own.

It was, however, terribly traumatic. When I was there I had a rush of memory. It was very vivid, although it looks so different now. Now it has grass and trees - at the time there was not a blade of grass or a tree anywhere. It was just mud and a terrible stench filled the air all the time from the burning crematoria. But it came back to me so vividly.

I coped while we were there because I was with friends, with people around me who cared. When I returned after the first visit I was utterly drained of emotion. It had an incredible effect on me.

The thing is that during all these years I had not lived in the past. If I had done so I would not have been able to cope with my life, because I had plenty of other problems to deal with. But when I was suddenly faced with that rush of memory, when I was reminded of what actually happened, I had a terrible reaction".

Extract from 'My Story - Mindhu Hornick, MBE' (p102).



3. How can we support each other?

Remind your group about the discussions you have had today - about the different feelings people might have at Holocaust-related sites (you could share **SLIDE 19** again to remind them). Ask them the question on **SLIDE 24**: 'who can support you?' and let them discuss their answers in pairs or small groups. You could add some prompts during their discussion by asking who can particularly support them before / during / after their visit? You can then ask the question on **SLIDE 25**: 'how can we support each other?' and give them time to discuss this too.

Ask the group to feedback. Hopefully the young people will realise there are lots of people who can support them - such as their group leaders, their parents / carers / families, and other responsible adults (such as teachers, religious leaders, or youth workers). It is important they realise they will also be able to support each other! You could open up the discussion to ask them to think about what to do if someone in the group gets upset, or needs some time out.

Remind your young people that you (and the other group leaders) are available between now and the visit, and how they can contact you. You might want to remind them of some practicalities

that will make their visit more comfortable - such as bringing appropriate clothing, music, or a book they enjoy for while you are travelling, etc.

Thank the group for their time and participation today, before drawing the session to a close (allowing time for any further questions). You can show **SLIDE 26** to recap what you have achieved during this session.

4. Including parents & carers

You can help the parents / carers of the young people in your group to support their children (and you) by giving them information about your upcoming visit. You could produce a booklet about where you are going, including the itinerary, etc. You could update them with what you have been discussing in these pre-visit sessions. You could also suggest some 'starter questions' that might open up conversations about the visit at home, such as those on **RESOURCE SHEET 14**.

Encourage them to be part of their child's learning by helping them to articulate how they feel about their upcoming visit.

Remind me where
you are visiting?

How are you
feeling about your
upcoming visit?

What do you know
about the
Holocaust-related
sites you will be
visiting?

Have you got any
questions about
your visit?

What are you
looking forward to
seeing / visiting /
learning?

Who can you talk
to if you have any
worries during
your visit?



Checklist

- ☐ Have you allowed time for pre-visit sessions in your itinerary? Do you have enough time (and an appropriate space) to host these sessions?
- ☐ Do you have the resources you need - notes, PowerPoint, print-outs, sticky notes, flip chart paper, etc.?
- ☐ Have you briefed the other adults leading your group in advance of the sessions?

- ☐ Do your young people have a clear, shared definition of what the Holocaust was?
- ☐ Do they have a better understanding of what Holocaust-related sites can be like?
- ☐ Are there any misconceptions that you still need to address or challenge during your visit?

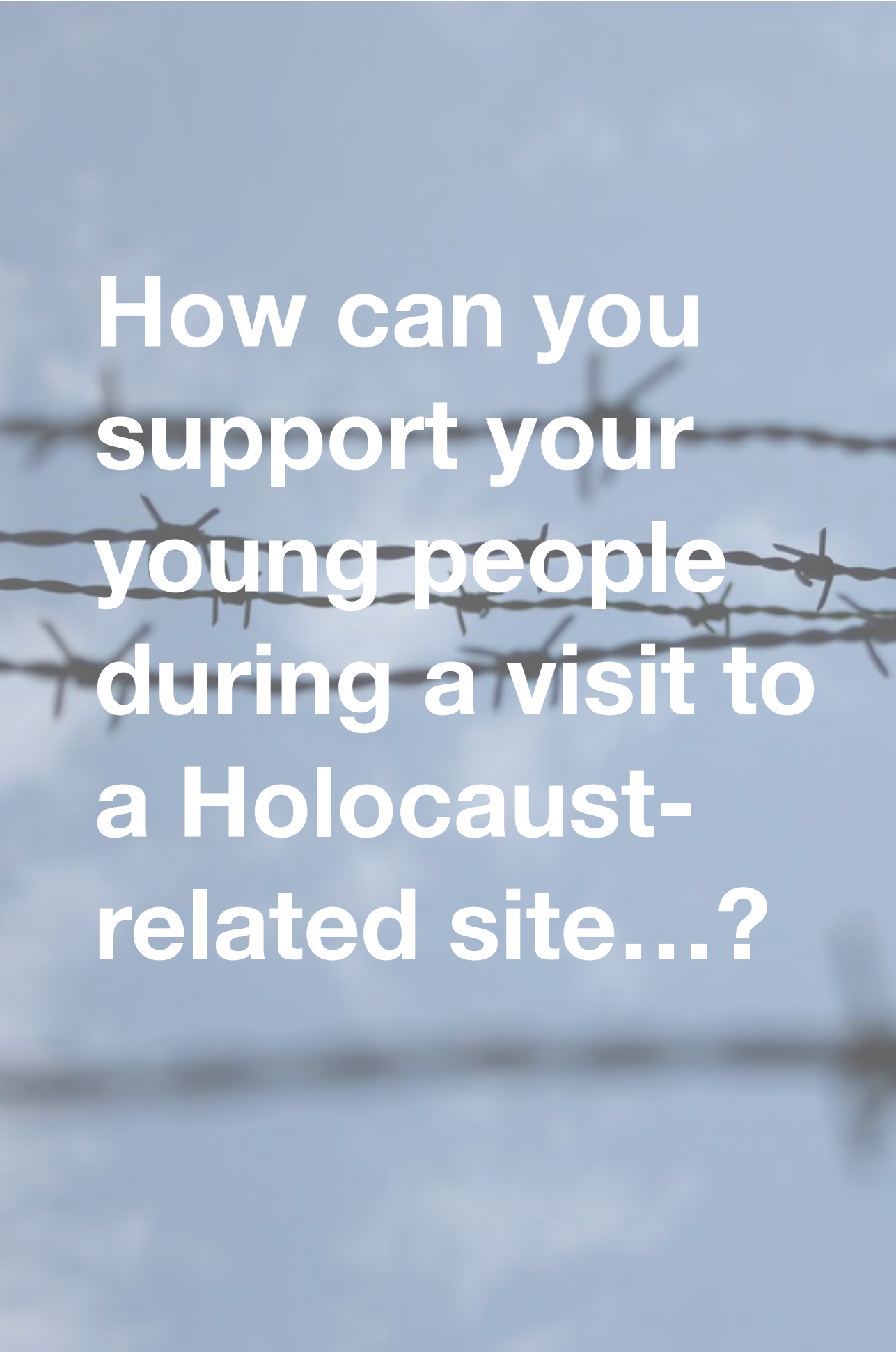
- ☐ Do your young people understand that people have a variety of emotional reactions at Holocaust-related sites?
- ☐ Do your young people know who can support them (and how they can support each other) during your visit?
- ☐ Have you ensured their parents / carers can also support them by providing them with information and / or discussion prompts to use at home?

Notes



section three

**resources:
during your visit**



**How can you
support your
young people
during a visit to
a Holocaust-
related site...?**

Session 3: getting ready for your visit

Aims:

1. to prepare the young people in your group for their visit today / tomorrow
2. to consider individuals and their testimony.

Preparation:

There are no PowerPoint slides for the sessions while you are on your visit (as you might not have free access to such resources in your accommodation). However, print-outs, sticky notes, flip chart paper & pens (if you have them) might be useful. You will need **RESOURCE SHEETS 15-19** printed out.

Time & timing:

Approximately 30 minutes, depending on your group. This session is intended as a short briefing session immediately before your visit - you could hold this session the evening before your site visit, or the morning of your site visit (whichever is most suitable to allow adequate time).

1. Thinking ahead to your visit

Gather your group together and welcome them. Remind them where you are going for your Holocaust-related site visit today / tomorrow. Remind them that in the previous sessions you thought about what their expectations of the site might be. Ask them to briefly revisit these expectations in small groups or pairs. Give them a few minutes to do so, then invite volunteers to feedback to the whole group. Some of their expectations might have changed now they are in the country and the visit is imminent so you'll need to be reassuring that this is okay.

2. Including individuals

While Holocaust-related sites usually commemorate many thousands of people, it is important to keep a focus on individual stories (the **individual threads** you have talked about in previous sessions). It is helpful to focus on an individual (or individuals) who were at the site you are about to visit, or whose experiences connect in some way with the site. You may need to do some research before your visit to find suitable testimony. The testimony extracts on the following pages (**RESOURCE SHEETS 15-19**)

illustrate a number of different experiences that you could read in this session:

- ▶ experiences of living conditions in a concentration camp - **Eva Behar** (in Auschwitz and at Bergen-Belsen)
- ▶ experiences of life in a ghetto - **Manfred Goldberg** (in the Riga Ghetto)
- ▶ experiences of a site of deportation - **Mindhu Hornick** (deported to Auschwitz by cattle wagon)
- ▶ experiences of life in hiding - **Monique Lillian Blake** (in France)
- ▶ experiences of a forced labour camp - **Manfred Goldberg** (in Riga Reichsbahn labour camp).

Share your chosen extract(s) with the group - preferably with print-outs for them to follow, or to read in smaller groups. Ask them to reflect for a few moments on the individual's experiences in each testimony extract.

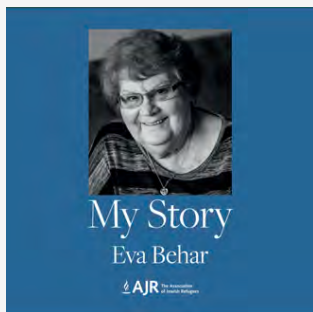
They may have questions that arise from the testimony, or there may be things they want to learn more about while they are at the site later. Remind them that while they might hear about 'thousands' of people today at the site, they should focus on individuals like the person whose testimony you have just shared together. Encourage them to look for an individual name or photograph at the site(s) today - perhaps this could be someone who they commit to finding out more about when they get home (which is an act of remembrance in itself).

Allow time for any final questions and make sure everyone in the group knows the itinerary for your visit. Remind them about how they are going to support each other during the visit today / tomorrow and how they will remember the survivor they have just heard from while they are there.

Eva remembers everyday life in the camps...

Eva was born in Romania in January 1925. She spent happy years in Cluj, Transylvania while at a Jewish school and it was there that her love for opera was born. Later Eva was sent to Auschwitz and then to Belsen, which she managed to survive despite horrific conditions and treatment, although she was gravely ill by the time the camps were liberated. She met her future husband Sammy at a Displaced Persons camp in Germany after the war. They married in Germany in November 1946 but Eva had to wait until May 1947 to be allowed to come to live in England.

In these extracts, Eva recalls everyday life in two concentration camps - first, at Auschwitz, then, at Belsen.



"Then we were marched to Barrack 25. That's when we started swapping dresses and somehow or other we got the right size dress on. Being girls we ripped the bottom off and made a belt out of it. Well, I know I did..."

In the barrack we slept on planks of wood. I can't tell you the size but I know that at the very beginning there were 12 of us on one plank. There were six people one way and six people the other way, like sardines, and I was on the upper bunk. I didn't know any of the girls in the barrack but funnily enough a lot of them were from Sighet [Eva's home town]. We stood for Appel (roll call) three hours every day, morning and night till all the numbers clicked..."

Extract from 'My Story - Eva Behar' (p15).

"We were shown into barracks with three levels of single bunks on top of each other. I was in the bottom bunk. The difference between here and Auschwitz was that at Auschwitz we used to get some sort of food morning, noon and night, here there was practically nothing at all to eat. We stood at roll call as per usual, morning and night and we soon realised that there was something very wrong. People were so ill they were dying all around us. Within a few weeks I contracted what I now know was typhus. The block hand at that time was a Slovak girl who was very fond of me and she didn't give up on me. At roll call they held my dress because I couldn't stand up while the Germans counted us. This girl wouldn't give up on me, if she had I wouldn't be sitting here today".

Extract from 'My Story - Eva Behar' (p19).

Manfred recalls searching for food in the ghetto...

Manfred was born in Germany. He was deported to the Riga Ghetto in Latvia, before being moved to Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig (Gdańsk). He was forced to work as a slave labourer in the Riga Ghetto and at Stutthof. When Stutthof was abandoned, he was sent on a 'death march' with other prisoners, before being liberated in Neustadt in Germany on 3rd May 1945. He came to England in September 1946.

In this extract, Manfred recalls daily life in the Riga Ghetto as an eleven-year-old. The ghetto was an area of the city of Riga that the Nazis had fenced off and forced all of the local Jewish people to live in, before murdering almost all of them in a nearby forest. Manfred was deported to the ghetto from his home in Kassel along with his mother and younger brother, Hermann. He recalls how the prisoners were controlled by the Nazi officers and the Latvian guards who collaborated with them. Manfred's testimony shows how desperate prisoners were for food in the cramped ghetto.



"Soon after our arrival at the ghetto, the Germans issued an order that within seven days all money and valuables still in our possession had to be handed over. Anyone caught having anything after that time would be punished by death. Of course, people disobeyed and held back some of their possessions and began using them when they were in town working during the day. They bartered some of their valuables for food and brought it into the camp to help feed their children. The Germans issued

another decree forbidding any food to be brought into the camp on pain of death. When the work groups were taken back into the camp at the end of the day, the guards would sometimes take one or two people at random and body search them to check whether there was any food concealed...

We children were bored during the day and we tended to get into trouble. I had to look after my little brother but, one day, I got a friend to look after him and I teamed up with another friend to go in search of food. Much of the ghetto was still empty; we were one of the earlier transports to arrive. We knew that the Riga Jews had been permitted to take things with them when they were forced to move there. Some took food, which was left behind after they were taken to the forest and murdered. My friend and I managed to get into the empty part of the ghetto, made our way into a house and searched for food. We had taken with us a children's sledge because there was still ice and snow on the ground. We clambered into the house, searched for food and found a half full sack of potatoes. We thought it was our lucky day! Between us, we managed to drag it out and as we were putting it on to the sledge, we looked up and found ourselves staring down the barrel of a rifle. One of the guards must have spotted us going in and waited for us to come out. With the rifle pointing at us, our hands shot up. We started crying and saying we were not thieves, we took it because we were hungry. "Please, we won't do it again," we begged... However much we pleaded, that rifle kept pointing at us and his face did not change for what seemed like an eternity. Suddenly, he broke into a grin and waved us on, and even allowed us to take the potatoes. It really was our lucky day. Of course, we never did it again".

Extract from 'My Story - Manfred Goldberg' (pp20-21).

Mindhu remembers being deported...

Mindhu was born in Czechoslovakia. Her family were forced to live in a ghetto before they were sent to Auschwitz. She was liberated after months of slave labour at the camp. Mindhu was eventually able to come to England in 1948 to live with her uncle and his family.

In this extract, Mindhu talks about being deported from a ghetto in Kosice (in Slovakia) to Auschwitz. She describes the terrible conditions in the cattle truck they were transported in, and their fear when they arrived at the camp in Poland.

"We were taken to a railway siding and there were these terrible cattle trucks; they started pushing us in, more and more. There were Hungarian soldiers, collaborators, to help and there were Slovaks also helping to push us into these carriages. I remember them putting a bucket in the middle for sanitation. We happened to be at the end by the door and my mother kept us there. They pushed so many people into the packed carriage that we felt we were suffocating. There were just mothers and children, maybe a few grandmothers, but no men at all in our transport. Many mothers with young children were desperate for milk, for food. The train kept shunting forwards and backwards, perhaps because of bomb damage to the railway line. This went on for three days and three nights.

After three days and three nights we were absolutely exhausted. The only food we had was what my mother had brought, and we were terribly thirsty because there was no water to drink. Then suddenly we stopped and we heard this dreadful clatter. They were undoing the chains of the truck. The cattle trucks had wooden partitions which allowed in a bit of air and without them we would all have suffocated. I remember looking through one of the partitions and my mother asked: "What can you see?" I said: "There are men walking around, soldiers with guns," and there was a sign which read 'Oswiecim' [pronounced 'Oz-vee-et-cheem']. The Germans called it Auschwitz, but for the Poles it was Oswiecim. My mother said she had never heard of it and she didn't know where we were.

Suddenly the door was opened and the scene that greeted us was nightmarish. There were loudspeakers and soldiers marching up and down with guns on their backs, walking around with Alsatians barking viciously.

Extract from 'My Story - Mindhu Hornick, MBE' (pp18&19).



Monique remembers being hidden...

Monique was born in 1939 in France. She spent most of the war being hidden by a family in a small village. She first came to England just after the war, before eventually marrying and settling here in her twenties.

In this extract, Monique remembers how she felt as though the whole village was involved in hiding her, not just the family she lived with (the Bruchet family). She remembers the risks other people took to hide her - and how determined the Nazis were to find every single Jewish person they could.

"The village school was run by nuns; I wasn't registered there but I attended even though I was very young, probably three by this time. I now think that the whole village must have been involved with hiding me. There were various stories to explain my being there, including that I had been thrown from a train, or left on a door step. There was a man who lived across the way. I can still see it now; he would yell and scream at me. I didn't know why. I think maybe he was a bit drunk but when the Germans came the villagers hid him away. I don't know where, but he obviously knew about me and they had to keep him quiet so he wouldn't tell about the little Jewish girl!

I know that the Germans came to look for me twice. Once I remember hearing marching feet coming and being hidden in the coal cellar, although at the time I didn't know why. There were woods behind the house and on the other occasion when the Germans came, Marcel [Bruchet] took me there for what seemed to me to be a long time. For many years I didn't understand how the Germans would have known to come there. It was a tiny village... An aunt of mine was sure that my parents had been denounced and that's how the Germans knew about me, because it would have been on my parents' papers that they had a child. Luckily the Germans never found me and I lived out the war with the Bruchet family".

Extract from 'My Story - Monique Lillian Blake' (pp8-18).



Manfred remembers being forced to work...

Manfred was born in Germany. He was deported to the Riga Ghetto in Latvia, before being moved to Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig (Gdańsk). He was forced to work as a slave labourer in the Riga Ghetto and at Stutthof. When Stutthof was abandoned, he was sent on a 'death march' with other prisoners, before being liberated in Neustadt in Germany on 3rd May 1945. He came to England in September 1946.

In this extract, Manfred remembers how he became a forced labourer in the purpose-built Riga Reichsbahn labour camp (known as 'Precu'). At the camp, he was made to repair railway lines for the Nazis after the Allies had bombed them.

"In this camp, everyone had to work, including me, aged 13... We were producing things to help the Germans. My mother and I were selected to work on a slave labour railway gang, because this camp was close to a busy railway junction. This was 1943 and the Allies had realised that an effective way of harming the German war effort was to damage the transport system. The Germans had long supply lines to their fighting front line and they supplied them by railway. This busy junction was a key transit point. All the trains going to the Eastern Front had to pass through, so it became an Allied air raid target. We were a group of around 300, who were marched out daily to the latest bombed section, and it became our job to take up the damaged railway tracks and fill in bomb craters.



We carried new rails from where they were stored to where they were needed, laid them and made the line serviceable again. But no sooner had we finished one repair job than we were taken to another because these raids were continuous. The Allies didn't let up - they kept on bombing. We were at this camp for a year and during all this time we were busy working on the railways".

Extract from 'My Story - Manfred Goldberg' (p27).

Session 4: reflecting on your visit (1)

Aims:

1. to support the young people in your group immediately after their visit to a Holocaust-related site.

Preparation:

There are no PowerPoint slides for the sessions while you are on your visit (as you might not have free access to such resources in your accommodation). However, print-outs, sticky notes, flip chart paper & pens (if you have them) might be useful. You will need **RESOURCE SHEETS 20 & 21** printed out.

Time & timing:

45-60 minutes, depending on your group. You will need to decide when to do this session (see below) but you should do it within 24 hours of your visit to a Holocaust-related site.

1. When should we hold this session?

Visiting a Holocaust-related site can be physically and emotionally exhausting, particularly if it has been as part of a long, busy day. We have already thought about the importance of building 'pauses' into your itinerary to ensure your young people don't become overwhelmed. This session should help them pause and reflect on their visit and to start to process their experiences at the site. You may wish to do this on the same day (perhaps in the evening, after dinner), or the following morning (perhaps after breakfast, before you leave for your next activity).

You know your group best - if they need some 'down time' (quiet time), or to do something fun or lighthearted after their site visit that is okay. It is not being disrespectful - sometimes groups need a release from the intensity of the visit. You will have to decide how you can achieve a balance of activities for your young people - and this will help them begin to process what they have seen and learned at the site(s).

2. Reflecting on their visit

Split the group into pairs or small groups and ask them a prompt question to get them talking, for example: 'how has your day been so far?' or 'how are you all?' These might seem like trivial questions, but the aim here is to get them relaxed and talking after an intense day. If you feel they really need to recalibrate from an

emotional day, try something even more generic... it's really important that they don't see this session as an 'exam' or that they feel they need to construct some artificial 'sadness'. It is essential that students feel they can talk openly about their experiences at the site(s) and sometimes we might need to help them avoid 'expected' responses.

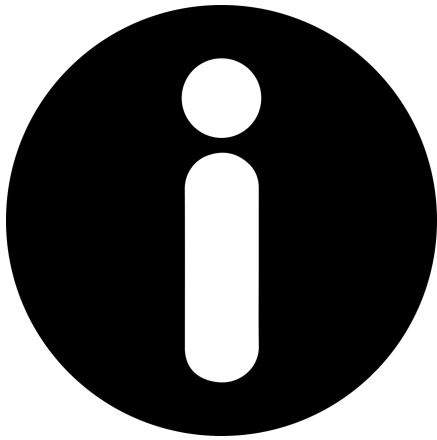
Tell your group that you are going to spend some time reflecting on your site visit. Remind them about the previous conversations you have had about the different emotions people might experience at sites, and that there are no 'right' ways to respond (and that they may even have been surprised by how they felt, or how they feel now).

Use the questions on **RESOURCE SHEET 20** to encourage your group to reflect on their site visit. You could just ask the questions of everyone, or hand each group one of the questions to discuss. Give them some time to talk, then ask / give them another question. The three questions are designed to prompt them to reflect on:

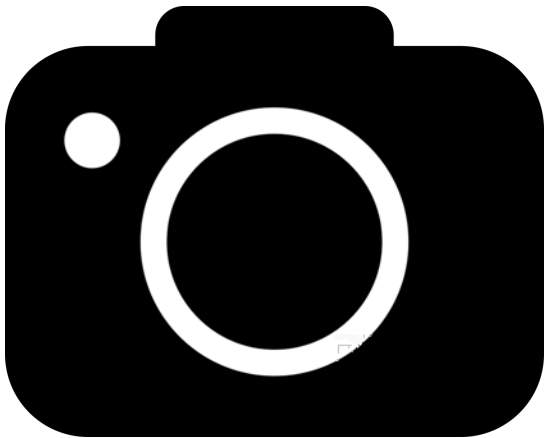
- ▶ something they **learned** at the site
- ▶ something they **saw** at the site
- ▶ something they **felt** at the site

Asking them to reflect in these three domains should help them begin to **make sense of what they have experienced** (although this will be just the start of a longer process for them).

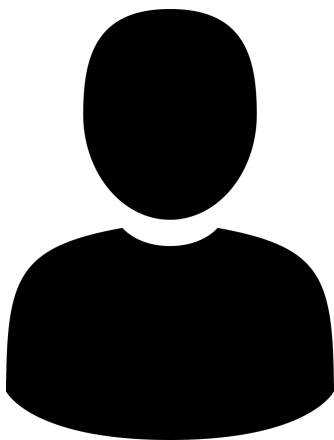




Tell us something
you read, heard, or
learned about...



Tell us something
you saw or wanted
to photograph...



Tell us something
you felt or
thought about...

3. Moving forwards...

When your young people have had plenty of time to discuss the things they learned, saw, and felt you could bring the group back together to feedback. It could be useful for them to hear about the variety of different things people learned, or the visual images that have stayed with them (if they took photographs on their phones they could share these with the group). Talking about how they felt might be more challenging - you will need to be sensitive to this. You could begin by modelling how you (and the other adults) felt. Remind them that you will talk more about their experience as your visit continues, and when you return home. Also remind them how they can support each other for the rest of your visit, and that the adults accompanying them are available throughout as well.

If you are visiting other Holocaust-related sites during your visit, you can repeat this session. If this is the case you could consider adapting the questions as follows (these questions are also on **RESOURCE SHEET 21**):

- ▶ how has visiting this site added to your learning about the Holocaust?
- ▶ how was this site visually similar / different to the other site(s) we visited?
- ▶ how did you feel at this site? Was this different / similar to how you felt at the other site(s)? Why do you think that was?

It is important that you don't encourage the young people in your group to **compare** the sites - that would not be appropriate. Instead, help them to understand how sites differ in appearance (physically, in educational content, in original purpose, etc.) and that this will have impacted their experiences at the sites and their developing understanding of the Holocaust.

As your visit continues, you will need to be vigilant in case some of your young people want to talk with you further about their site visit. They might have questions immediately, or after a few days' reflection. They might dwell on things they found challenging, so try to provide some pauses in your itinerary where the adults can be available to them.

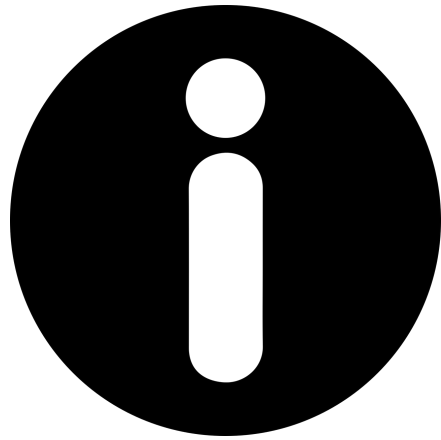
4. Talking to other people

At some point before you return home, it is helpful to discuss with your young people how they might talk to others about their experiences. You could start by asking them how they think they might respond to friends or family asking them '*did you have a good trip?*' This is a common (and understandable) question from those close to them - they will want to hear about their visit and to make sure they are okay after it. However, it can be a really challenging question for young people to answer because they might struggle to adequately convey their experiences, the sites, and their emotions. They might choose to simply respond with a short answer, such as 'it was really interesting and I learned a lot, thank you' - explain to them that this is okay.

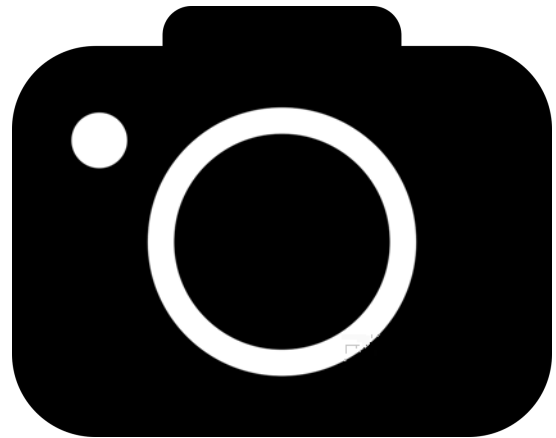
Other people might want to probe further and find out more, however, so you could guide your young people in how they might respond. For example, if someone says they want to 'hear all about it' they might need to set some time aside to talk to them properly. They might want to share photographs, or testimony they heard during their visit. Remind them that they will need to think about the age of their audience and how much detail they might give. Also reassure them that it is okay if they do not want to talk too much about their visit yet - and that your group will be coming back together in a few weeks to reflect on your visit and how to talk to others about it.



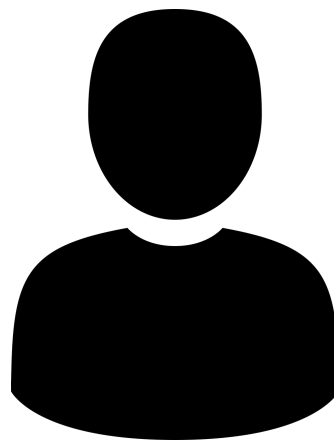
► How has visiting this site added to your learning...?



► How was this site visually similar / different to the other site(s) we visited...?



► How did you feel at this site...?
► Was this different / similar to how you felt at the other site(s)...?
► Why do you think that was...?





Checklist

- ☐ Have you allowed time for some immediate post-visit sessions?
- ☐ Are there other pauses in your itinerary for your young people to reflect on their visit(s) and to ask questions?

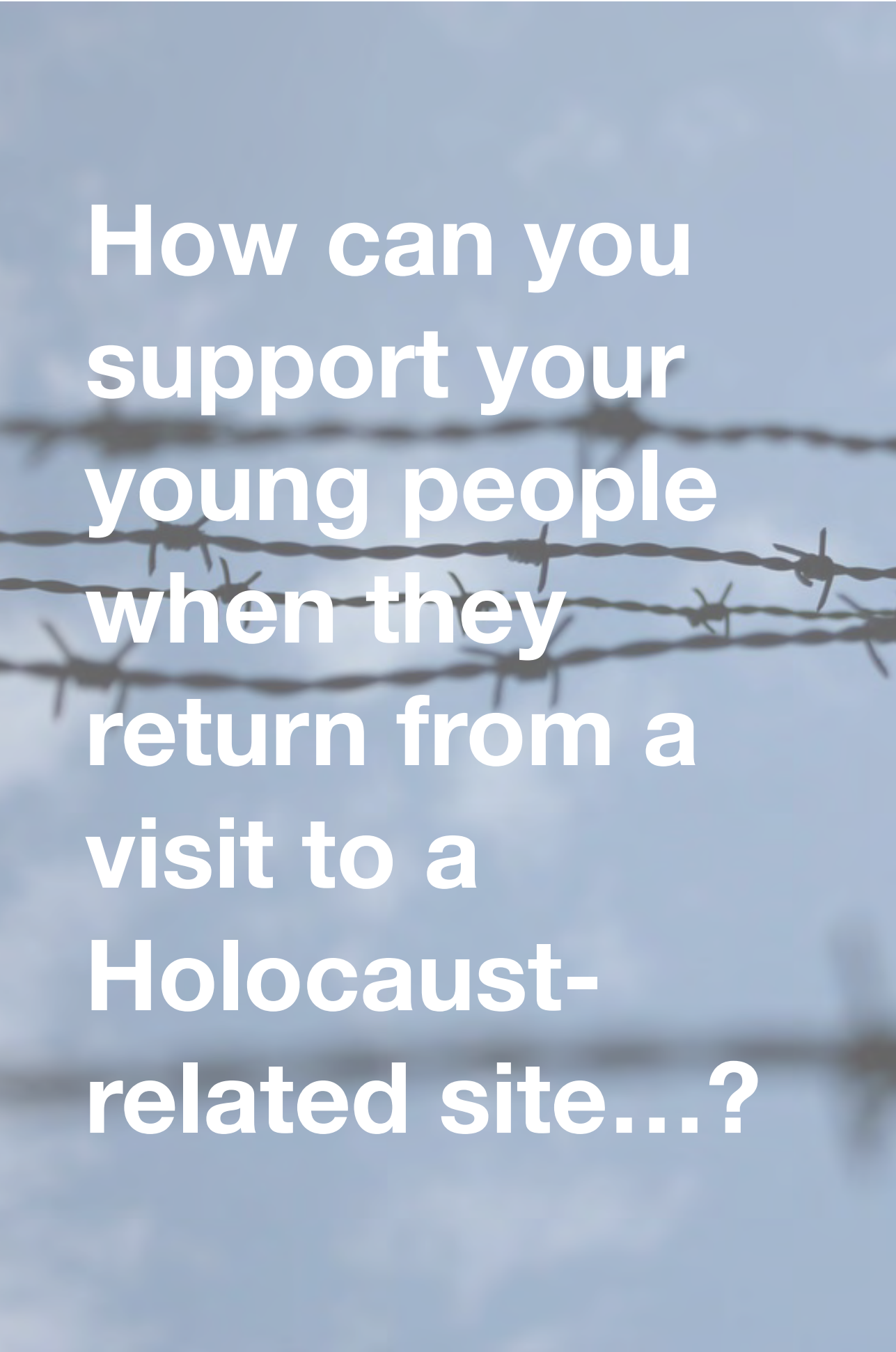
- ☐ Have you talked with your group about how they might tell other people about their experiences?

Notes



section four

**resources:
after your visit**



**How can you
support your
young people
when they
return from a
visit to a
Holocaust-
related site...?**

Session 5: reflecting on your visit (2)

Aims:

1. to help your group to continue to reflect on their experiences of visiting Holocaust-related sites.

Preparation:

You will need the PowerPoint **SLIDES 27-30** (on screen, or printed out for the group). Sticky notes / flip chart paper & pens might be useful too. You will need a selection of photographs from your visit for the PowerPoint (optional) and for the activities (see below). You will also need **RESOURCE SHEETS 22 & 23** printed out.

Time & timing:

Approximately 45-60 minutes, depending on your group. This session is intended as a debrief following your visit. You could hold this session immediately after you return, although it is better to hold it after you have been back a week or two (so that your group have had some time to reflect further on their visit).

1. 'Did you have a good trip?'

Welcome the group back together and check they are all okay. You can share **SLIDE 27** with them to explain the aim of today's session. A good way to begin reflecting on your visit is to ask them to discuss in smaller groups whether they were asked the question (or similar) on **SLIDE 28** - 'did you have a good trip?' If so, how did they respond? You will probably find that they give a variety of answers - for example, teachers who asked them this question in passing with just a few seconds to answer, or grandparents who maybe sat them down to 'hear all about it' over a longer time. They will have responded in different ways. Ask them how they conveyed what they had seen and experienced. Some will have enthusiastically recounted their visit in detail, while others will have been more reticent. Some young people struggle to put their experiences into words - this session is a good opportunity to help them with this.

Share **RESOURCE SHEET 22** with your young people. Read it together, or ask them to read it in pairs / smaller groups. Ask them to reflect on Sidney's experiences of going back to Germany.

Point out to them that according to his testimony, this became easier for him over time.

Thinking about their experiences at the site(s) you visited, you could ask them whether they think it would be 'easier' to go back again, or to go to other Holocaust-related sites now? You are likely to get a range of answers - ask them why they have responded as they have? Let them know that it is okay to not want to revisit these sites, or not to visit other similar sites. Equally, it is okay to want to go back (possibly to learn more about the site), or to visit other sites (to learn about different experiences in different places).

2. Reflecting on your visit

Remind them of the Holocaust-related sites you visited - you could show them photographs of some of the sites on **SLIDE 29** as an example that you could use from a visit to the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum (or replace these images with photos from your own visit). The slide shows 'iconic' spaces such as the 'Arbeit Macht Frei' gate and the guard tower at Auschwitz II Birkenau, living conditions in the barracks at Birkenau, looted possessions (baskets and suitcases) at Auschwitz I, and modes of transportation (a goods wagon, and the railway tracks outside Birkenau). You could invite the young people in your group to reflect on these different images in a number of ways, for example...

- ▶ ask them to choose one of the locations on screen to discuss in pairs / small groups
- ▶ give them a picture of a single location and ask them to reflect on that space in pairs / small groups
- ▶ provide them with flip chart paper with a photograph of a particular space on it and ask them to reflect on it and write their responses on the flip chart paper
- ▶ ask them to respond to images of different spaces through an interactive website or app and discuss the feedback together
- ▶ put the pictures of the different spaces on the wall around the room and ask them to reflect on the spaces on sticky notes and place them on the images.

Once they have had time to reflect on a few different spaces, bring the group back together to feed back. Again, remind them that there are no 'right' ways to respond - different people will have reacted to different spaces in different ways (during their visit and since). You might consider focusing on their reactions to common spaces such as:

- former living conditions at the site(s)
- monuments and memorials
- buildings and structures
- victims' possessions
- geography - the landscape and the weather, wildlife, or the proximity of local buildings / residential areas.

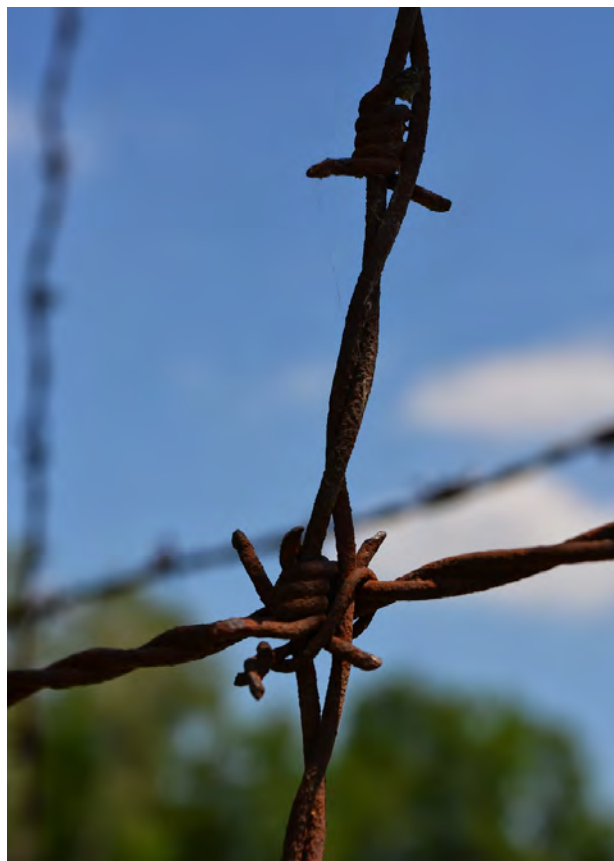
These themes can raise important issues. For example, the weather at the site during your visit might influence how they are responding to it now (for example, they might think a bright, sunny day was incongruous with the site's history). They might comment on the proximity of local houses, asking 'how can people live there now, knowing what happened there?' or ask 'what might local people have known at the time?' These types of question are ones that they are likely to have mulled over in the weeks since your visit. You may not have all of the answers for them, but reassure them that these are all important questions to think about.

Reflecting on the site(s) you visited might take some time, and you might be surprised about how deeply your young people discuss their experiences. For many of them this will be the first opportunity they have had to talk about their visit in depth, particularly with people who shared the experience with them. Make sure you have time to allow them to talk.

3. What have you learned?

While it might now seem like they have more questions than answers, this shows that they have learned a lot during their visit (because they are no longer satisfied with the simple preconceptions and explanations they might have had before). It is important that you understand what they have learned so that:

- you can evaluate your visit and their learning
- you can address any remaining misconceptions



This session must not seem like an exam though... instead, find an appropriate (and non-threatening) way to assess their learning. An example feedback form for doing this is **RESOURCE SHEET 23**. This example asks participants their thoughts on the Holocaust-related site(s) they have visited, what they think they have learned during their visit, and any questions they still have. You might want to modify / adapt these questions for your group, so long as you have a record of what learning has been achieved (and can identify any residual misconceptions). However, you might need to create some additional time to answer some of their remaining questions raised here, however.

Once they have had time to complete their feedback forms, draw the group back together. Thank them again for their time today. You can show **SLIDE 30** to remind them of the aim of this session. Remind them that this session has given everyone (yourself included) some space to reflect and **continue** to process your experiences at the Holocaust-related site(s). Emphasise the word 'continue' here - reassure them that this reflection will be an ongoing process and that they (hopefully) will continue to reflect on and remember this experience for years to come.

Sidney returns to Germany...

Sidney was born in Germany in 1925. He was forced out of his school in 1935 because he was Jewish. He came to England in 1939 on one of the 'Kindertransports' - these were trains out of Austria and Germany that brought thousands of children to safety. Sidney was 13 years old. He never saw his mother and father again.

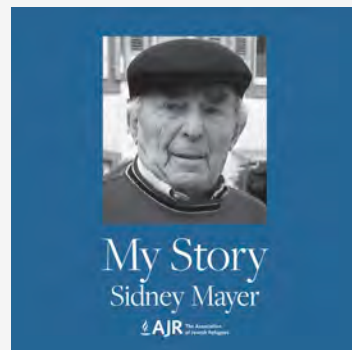
In this extract, Sidney remembers how he felt the first time he returned to Germany. He had many bad memories of the place, but wanted to return to see where he grew up.

"I've been back to Germany a number of times. In May 1950, I first went back to Böchingen, the village where I grew up. My pal Gordon came with me in a van... We drove down to Dover and caught the boat across to France, and went to Paris..."

I had mixed feelings about going back to Germany the first time. I didn't want to go. When we arrived at the frontier and I saw the Germans in their customs uniforms, I said: 'This is as far as I'm going.' Gordon said: 'What? Do you mean you're not going?' I said: 'No, I'm frightened.' He told me: 'You don't have to be frightened, you're a British citizen.' So I went. But the fear was there. The uniforms brought it all on. They were very nice to me, but once they saw my passport, with it saying I was born in Germany, I thought they knew who or what I was.

I carried on visiting Germany on average two or three times a year... Once I started to make frequent visits my German started to come back and I speak it like a local now".

Extract from 'My Story - Sidney Mayer' (p41&45).



Feedback...

what are your thoughts / reflections on the Holocaust-related site(s) we visited?

what did you learn about the Holocaust during our visit that you did not know before?

what would you like to find out more about following our visit?

Your name: _____

Session 6: acting on your visit

Aims:

1. to help your group to consider different ways in which the young people could respond to their visit.

Preparation:

You will need the PowerPoint **SLIDES 31-37** (on screen, or printed out for the group). Sticky notes / flip chart paper & pens might be useful too. You will also need **RESOURCE SHEETS 24-26** printed out.

Time & timing:

Approximately 45-60 minutes, depending on your group, plus time to carry out the activities (if your group choose to).

1. What's next? Responding to visits to Holocaust-related sites

Welcome the group back together and check they are all okay. Remind them of everything you have achieved together so far - your visits to the Holocaust-related sites, the testimonies you have heard, and all that they have learned together. Share **SLIDE 31** with the group and explain to them that today they are going to consider some of the different ways they could respond to their visit to Holocaust-related sites.

Explain to your young people that you are going to be thinking about how they could respond to their visit through some kind of positive action in response to what they have seen and learned. Let them know that lots of people feel motivated to 'do something' after learning about the Holocaust - they feel they want to do something 'positive' in the world. You could explicitly link this to the Jewish concept of '**tikkun olam**' - the concept of doing something to improve or 'repair' the world. People sometimes feel helpless in the face of learning about the tragedy of the Holocaust and so chose to do something (like charity work) to try to make the contemporary world a better place.

It is important at this point to emphasise that not everyone feels this way and that they don't have to do anything. In this session you are going to think about some 'actional responses' they could do, if they want to.

Share the quotes on **SLIDES 32-34** or **RESOURCE SHEET 24** with your young people. These quotes are from three survivors:

- ▶ **Julia Fisher** - who volunteered in her local community because it gave her a sense of belonging in her adoptive country
- ▶ **Frank Leigh** - who has a message for future generations to be more tolerant and peaceful
- ▶ **Gabriele Keenaghan** - who hopes that giving her testimony will help other people be more tolerant of diversity.

Note: the word 'tolerant' can be problematic now, as it has connotations of superficially 'putting up with' each other. Reassure your young people that it is meant here in the sense of mutual respect.

Give them a few minutes to reflect on the quotes and why they think the survivors felt as they did. Ask your group if they feel they want to 'do' something in response to their visit and the testimonies they have heard. It is likely that many of them will feel they want to undertake some kind of actional response - so next ask them what kinds of things they think they could do?

You are likely to have a range of responses such as:

- ▶ **personal actions** - doing something for a friend or family member, trying to be more kind or compassionate, etc.
- ▶ **educational actions** - teaching others about the Holocaust through talks, school assemblies, the media, etc.
- ▶ **social actions** - working with a charity, fundraising, awareness-raising, volunteering, etc.

Whatever they wish to do, make sure they understand they don't have to do the same things - different people respond to Holocaust-related sites differently - and they should not feel they **have to** do anything.

“I have done a lot of voluntary work and stood up for a lot of causes. It helps make me feel part of the community”.



'My Story, Julia and Janos Fisher' (p41)

“I have a message for future generations: the world needs a lot of tolerance for other peoples' ways, opinions, and manners. That would be marvellous, and then there would be no wars”.



'My Story, Frank Leigh' (p62)

“I sincerely hope that my talks and the telling of my story in this book will evoke kindness, tolerance and acceptance of diversity in other people, of whatever age they may be”.



'My Story, Gabriele Keenaghan BEM' (p63)

2. Deciding what to do...

For those young people who wish to do something in response to their Holocaust-related site visit, it will be useful now to spend some time planning what they can do. Help them to consider a project that is:

- ▶ **manageable** - a project that they can complete in the time they have available to undertake it
- ▶ **suited to their skills** - a project where they can use their talents (for example, giving a talk if they are good at public speaking, or designing a memorial if they are artistic).

They should also consider who could help / support them (such as their teachers, or family members), and whether they want to work together or on their own.

Share **SLIDE 35** with them - this shows a range of possible actions they might undertake (remember - some of them might feel like they want to do something, but have no idea 'what yet!'). Also reassure them that they can do something that is not on the slide. Encourage your young people to fill in **RESOURCE SHEET 25** to begin to plan:

- ▶ what they want to do
- ▶ who can help them and what they will need to succeed
- ▶ how their activity can be broken down into smaller, achievable steps.

Encourage your young people to add some dates to the final box of **RESOURCE SHEET 25** so they have a realistic timescale to work to. Finally, feeding back as a whole group at this point might help them connect with others who they can work with and share resources. For those planning an educational activity (such as a talk or school assembly) **RESOURCE SHEET 26** will help them to focus on who their intended audience will be and what they want to tell them about. When filling in the second box, you should encourage them to reflect on the ages of their intended audience as you may need to guide them on making sure their activity is age-appropriate in its content.

Make sure your group are clear about **what** they want to do, **how** they can achieve it and by **when**. Reassure them and remind them how they can get support for their activities in the future. You might also want to establish a time

when they can come back together as a group to report back on their progress (if they want to).

*Remember - responding to a site visit should be a matter of **choice**, not a burden on your young people. Any activity they undertake should be a **positive consequence** of their visit, not an expectation.*

To finish, remind the group about what you have achieved in this session (**SLIDE 36**) and ask if there are any final questions. Thank them again for their time and commitment throughout your programme - and wish them well for their planned activities and for the future.

You could close the session with a short reflection - perhaps asking each young person to offer a single thought or experience that will particularly 'stay with them'. To finish, you could return to survivor testimony (as we have done throughout these sessions), perhaps with these inspiring and challenging words from Anita Grant (**SLIDE 37**):



"It is hard to believe the Holocaust happened or understand how... I want to tell future generations to make peace. People are being hounded out of their homes and having to go to other countries, as I did. There are refugees all over the world. It's a very hard task – and, to be honest, I fear it may never, ever happen – but I still hope there will be peace in the world".

Anita Grant 'My Story' (p64)

what would you like to do?

who can help / support you?
what else do you need to be successful?

now break your activity down into smaller, achievable steps:

who is your audience?

how much will they already know about the Holocaust?

what are the key points you want to share with them?



Checklist

- ☐ Have you allowed time for a post-visit session with your group?
- ☐ What are the logistics for this session - how will you gather the group together after their visit and how long will it be after you return?

- ☐ Have you thought about how and why (and whether) you might assess the group's learning?
- ☐ If you are going to include an assessment, how will you do this? How will you act on the assessment data you get?

- ☐ How do you feel about your young people undertaking an 'actional response' to their visit?
- ☐ Have you thought about how you might be able to support them in any projects they might want to undertake?
- ☐ Do you want to arrange a further date for the group to meet up to discuss their projects, if they want to?

Notes



section five

**visiting sites
in the UK
and virtually**



**How can
local
Holocaust-
related sites
be included
in your
visit...?**

The UK Holocaust Map...

making links with Holocaust-related sites near you

Although the Holocaust did not happen directly on UK mainland soil, there are many sites related to Holocaust survivors, victims, and rescuers across the UK. These sites are brought together on the AJR's [UK Holocaust Map](#) website.

? What is the UK Holocaust Map?

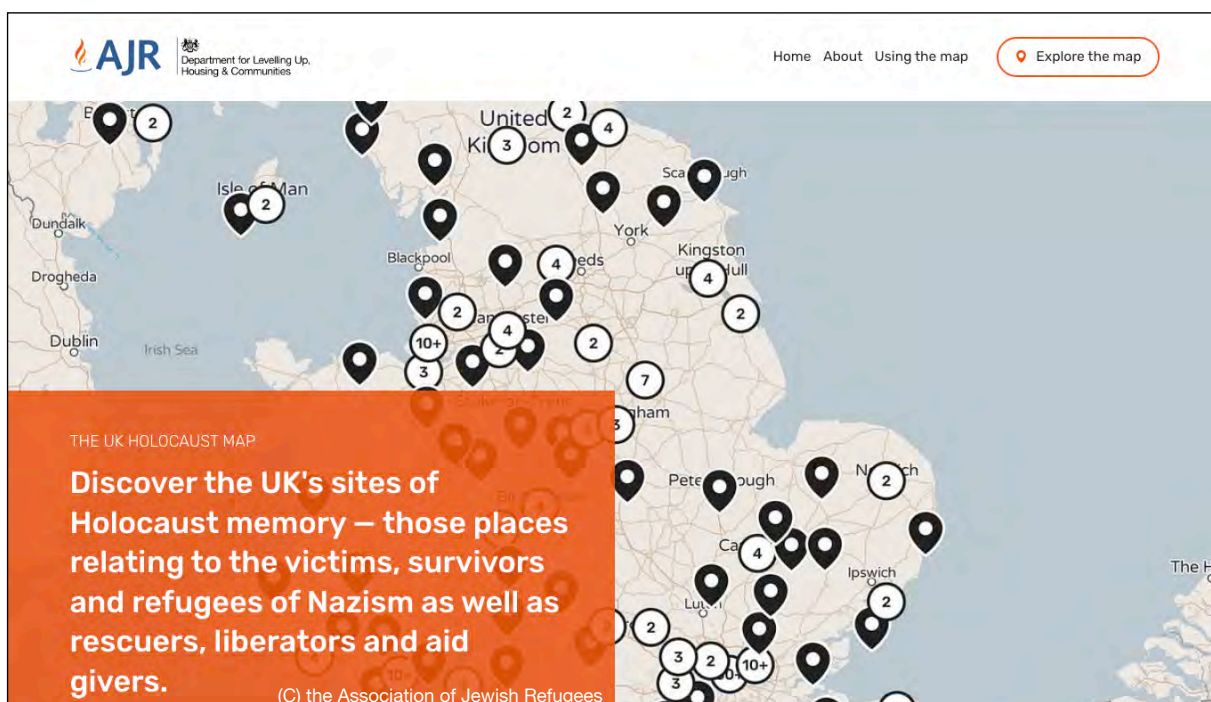
The UK Holocaust Map (pictured here) is an interactive website which draws together information and archival resources from a multitude of Holocaust-related sites across the UK. These sites include:

- ▶ sites related to rescuers such as Sir Nicholas Winton, Jane Haining, and Trevor Chadwick
- ▶ sites where there were hostels that became homes for Jewish refugees, such as the Cardiff Refugee Hostel and the Sainsbury Home in Putney, London
- ▶ sites of internment camps, such as those on the Isle of Man, and in the Huyton area of Liverpool
- ▶ sites where Refugee Committees convened, such as the Refugee Committees in Belfast, Cornwall, and Hull

- ▶ sites marking the lives of other Jewish refugees, their families, or significant events. For example, the bronze bust of Elena Gerhardt (a world-renown German-Jewish singer who fled to England in the 1930s) which can be found at the Royal Academy of Arts in central London.

The UK Holocaust Map is an initiative of the [Association of Jewish Refugees](#) and what was called the 'Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities' in the UK Government. The map links to resources from archives such as the [Jewish History Association of South Wales](#), the [Anne Frank Trust UK](#), and the [Scottish Jewish Archive Centre](#).

Examples of how the UK Holocaust Map could be linked with your site visits follow on the next few pages. These examples focus on the contributions Jewish refugees have made to the Arts and to disability sport in the UK and beyond, and how Jewish refugees were welcomed to the UK before and after the Holocaust.





(C) Alasdair Richardson

The Edinburgh International Festival

Born into a Jewish family in Vienna in 1902, Rudolph Bing fled to the UK in 1934 as a refugee from rising Nazi oppression. He had been working in management in the Arts in Germany and when he came to England he took up a position with the newly founded Glyndebourne Opera in Sussex. He became a British citizen in 1946. 📍 The Edinburgh International Festival launched the following year - Rudolf was one of its co-founders and its first Director. Today the International Festival is one of the most significant in the world, and has inspired several other festivals including the Edinburgh International Book Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (the world's largest Arts festival).

Rudolph moved to America in 1941 to become General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera. He was Knighted in 1971 for 'services to Anglo-American relations'. In 2017 the Association of Jewish Refugees unveiled a plaque to Sir Rudolph Bing outside the entrance to 'The Hub' - the church-like building that has been home to the Edinburgh International Festival since 1999.

? How is this a Holocaust-related site?

Rudolph Bing fled Nazi Germany in 1934, just a year after Adolf Hitler seized power. Several restrictive laws would have been enacted by his government by the time Rudolph decided to flee. For example, in 1933 the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service excluded Jewish people (and others) from many government and academic positions. Soon after, similar laws placed restrictions on Jewish doctors, school teachers, and those in the legal profession. The 'Nuremberg Laws' were introduced the following year. Given the rapidly growing state-sponsored restrictions on Rudolph and his family, it is not surprising he chose to leave while he still could. Many Historians argue that the Holocaust began with the introduction of these laws. As such, Rudolph is certainly a survivor of the Holocaust - had he stayed his life would have become increasingly in danger. The Hub in Edinburgh represents the place he fled to (the UK) and the skills he had in the Arts that the Nazis ignored simply because of his Jewish identity.



How can you include this local history into your visit to a Holocaust-related site abroad?

Many sites abroad tell the stories of people who fled as refugees - Rudolph Bing is one such refugee. The Holocaust happened in an advanced, cultured society and Rudolph's work in the Arts demonstrates this (and how Jewish art was deemed less worthwhile by the Nazis). Many sites commemorate the destruction of Jewish creativity, such as the Holocaust Memorial on Vienna's Judenplatz (which we have already looked at) - one way of interpreting this site is that the monument shows the 'missing' books that were (or could have been) written by Jewish people killed in the Holocaust. Similarly, the memorial on Bebelplatz in Berlin commemorates the book burnings that took place in Germany and Austria throughout the 1930s - the memorial there is of empty bookcases. Many other memorials are artistic interpretations of their site's history.

Sir Rudolph Bing was one of many Jewish artists. His survival meant the world is a richer place culturally. Conversely, the loss of so many others - writers, performers, visual artists, and others - meant the world is much poorer culturally. By linking to this Holocaust-related site at The Hub in Edinburgh you will be able to help your young people make links between the past and present, the geographically distant and the nearby, as well as the contribution of Jewish refugees to the cultural life and history of this country.



(C) Alasdair Richardson



This page: medal ceremony for the men's T54 classification wheelchair race at the London 2012 Paralympic Games - won by David Weir CBE (centre, representing Team GB).

Next page: photograph from the unveiling of an AJR blue plaque at Stoke Mandeville Hospital to commemorate Sir Ludwig Gutmann - the plaque was unveiled in August 2013, exactly one year after London hosted the Paralympic Games.

(C) Alasdair Richardson

The Paralympic Games

Dr Ludwig Guttman found refuge in Britain in March 1939. Anti-Jewish laws introduced in Nazi Germany meant he had been removed from his jobs as a neuroscientist and university lecturer. Instead, he had been working at Breslau Jewish Hospital, becoming its Medical Director in 1937. On the night of the November Pogrom ('Kristallnacht') in 1938 he refused to allow Gestapo and SS men to take Jewish people from his hospital to concentration camps.

Dr Guttman was able to escape Nazi Germany in 1939 under a scheme to find posts for persecuted academics and scientists. The scheme was organised by the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (now the [Council for At-Risk Academics](#) - CARA).

The Guttmans (Ludwig, his wife and their young son and daughter) settled in Oxford and Ludwig resumed his spinal injury research at the Radcliffe Infirmary there. In 1943 Dr Guttman was asked to establish the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Buckinghamshire. The Centre was established by the British government and the Royal Air Force in response to the increasing numbers of injured pilots. From its outset, Dr Guttman insisted the Centre emphasised the importance of sport in helping patients to recover and rehabilitate.

The first sporting event for people with disabilities was held at Stoke Mandeville Stadium in 1948. Dr Ludwig Guttman was knighted in 1966. He was a member of the Association of Jewish Refugees for many years and has become known as the 'father' of the Paralympic Games.



(C) the Association of Jewish Refugees

? How is this a Holocaust-related site?

The plaque at Stoke Mandeville Hospital reminds us about one of the many scientists and academics whose work was deemed unimportant under the Nuremberg Laws - one of the first state-led actions of the Holocaust.

? How can you include this local history into your visit to a Holocaust-related site abroad?

Holocaust-related sites are often directly linked to the consequences of the Nuremberg Laws (such as loss of employment, deportations, segregation, forced sterilisation, etc.). In the case of Dr Ludwig Guttman, his story represents both the plight of Jewish victims, and of those with disabilities who were persecuted by the Nazis and their collaborators.

Stoke Mandeville is one of many sites where Jewish refugees made a contribution to the countries they settled in. It also represents the birthplace of the Paralympic Games - a worldwide movement that celebrates the sporting achievements of people with disabilities. Rather than seeing Jewish people and those with disabilities only as victims, this site allows your young people to see the achievements of both groups.

Under the Nuremberg Laws, Nazi pseudo-science was used to justify the labelling and segregation (and ultimate destruction) of people who didn't fit the Nazis' perception of the perfect human being. Dr Ludwig Guttman and the Paralympic Movement remind your young people about the transformative power of real science and the power of the human spirit.

In 2024 the Paralympic Torch Relay began with a flame created at Stoke Mandeville, as it did when London hosted the games in 2012. The intention is that this will become a permanent tradition from this point onwards, recognising the significance of the place and of Dr Guttman's contribution to the modern Paralympic movement.

This page: historic buildings in Manchester's city centre (for illustration - not Northumberland Street)

Next page: some of the young Jewish refugees who stayed at the Northumberland Street Hostel, pictured with Franz Pichower (far left) in 1946.



(C) the Association of Jewish Refugees (inset)

The Northumberland Street Hostel, Salford

Jewish refugees came to the UK before, during, and after the war. The Northumberland Street Hostel in Salford had provided a temporary home to some of the young children who came here on the Kindertransports in 1938 and 1939. Around 8,000 Jewish refugees came to Manchester in the 1930s.

In 1938 the Manchester Jewish Refugee Aid Committee was established to oversee the day-to-day administration of the Northumberland Street Hostel. The committee was chaired by Rachel Barash. After the war Fanny Pine and her husband Franz Pichower became the hostel's wardens. They cared for 25 boys in the hostel, supporting them in establishing their new lives here. In many cases, the children and young people who came to the hostel were the only members of their family to survive the Holocaust.

? How is this a Holocaust-related site?

The Northumberland Street Hostel tells us a lot about the progress of the anti-Jewish restrictions introduced by Nazi Germany - it is a place refugees fled to before the war (on the Kindertransports), as well as afterwards (as refugees from the camps). It also tells us about British responses to the Nazi regime and the Holocaust.

? How can you include this local history into your visit to a Holocaust-related site abroad?

The story of the Northumberland Street Hostel can help the young people in your group to better understand the experiences of refugees (especially child refugees). In particular the hostel helps us to address the question of what happened to child refugees after the war? Many ended up as displaced persons, having survived terrible conditions in concentration camps or in hiding. Many had no homes to return to, and were deeply traumatised by their experiences. They found themselves in new countries where they did not speak the language or have any support network. The responses of organisations such as the Manchester Jewish Refugee Aid Committee and the umbrella organisation The Central British Fund for German Jewry (which

has become [World Jewish Relief](#)) were pivotal in Britain's response to the plight of these child refugees. However, the responses of these Jewish community-led initiatives should be viewed in sharp contrast to pre-war government-led initiatives. Governmental attitudes changed, however, as more became known about the persecution of Jewish people, with Prime Minister Winston Churchill recognising in a 1941 broadcast that:

"None has suffered more cruelly than the Jew the unspeakable evils wrought upon the bodies and spirits of men by Hitler and his vile regime"

Subsequently all Jewish child refugees in the UK were offered full British citizenship in 1946.

Fanny Pine came to Cardiff in 1939 to work as an au pair to escape Nazi persecution after the November Pogrom ('Kristallnacht') in 1938. She and her husband Franz became the wardens of the Northumberland Street Hostel in 1946. The young people in your group can read her recollections about this time in **RESOURCE SHEET 27**. Gently highlight with them the trauma these young people had experienced at places such as the Holocaust-related site(s) you are visiting abroad, and the difficulties they had adjusting to life in the UK. Fanny comments on the success they had eventually - helping the boys to get qualifications and jobs. Remind your young people that most of the child refugees who came went on to live happy and successful lives here, contributing so much to British society that we should celebrate.



(C) the Association of Jewish Refugees

Fanny Pine remembers the boys who lived at Northumberland Street Hostel...



"In 1946 because my husband had the experience with youth, we were asked by the refugees committee here whether we would take charge of the hostel for children who had survived the camps. And, we didn't know what we were letting ourselves in for because we had no idea what children like this were like and how to handle them..."

[The children] did not trust us, when we were so kind to them... they thought it was because, well it won't last, they do it because they want to lure us, you know again, into some sort of camp, or...

They had no formal education, they came there [to the camps] at the age of, you know the Polish boys from the age of perhaps ten, nine/ten. When they were released they were about 15/16. They had no formal education; we had to see that they learned the language, with teachers coming to the hostel. We tried to bring them back to yiddishkeit [the Jewish way of life], because they had given up, they didn't want to know any more, although they had come from very religious homes, at home, but of course all these experiences, they had lost faith and they didn't want to know. And they tried hard to, you know, bring them back, we achieved a little, but actually, later on, after a year we thought the boys should not be together in a camp or hostel life, they should be with private families and they should learn to live a normal life. There were fights going on sometimes, you know... It was not easy. They did not trust us. They thought we didn't do enough for them, after what they had gone through, they wanted everything, whatever they wanted we should give them, bicycles, watches, whatever, they thought they deserved it, you know. And, we couldn't give them everything, we were very much restricted, and also the money wasn't there...



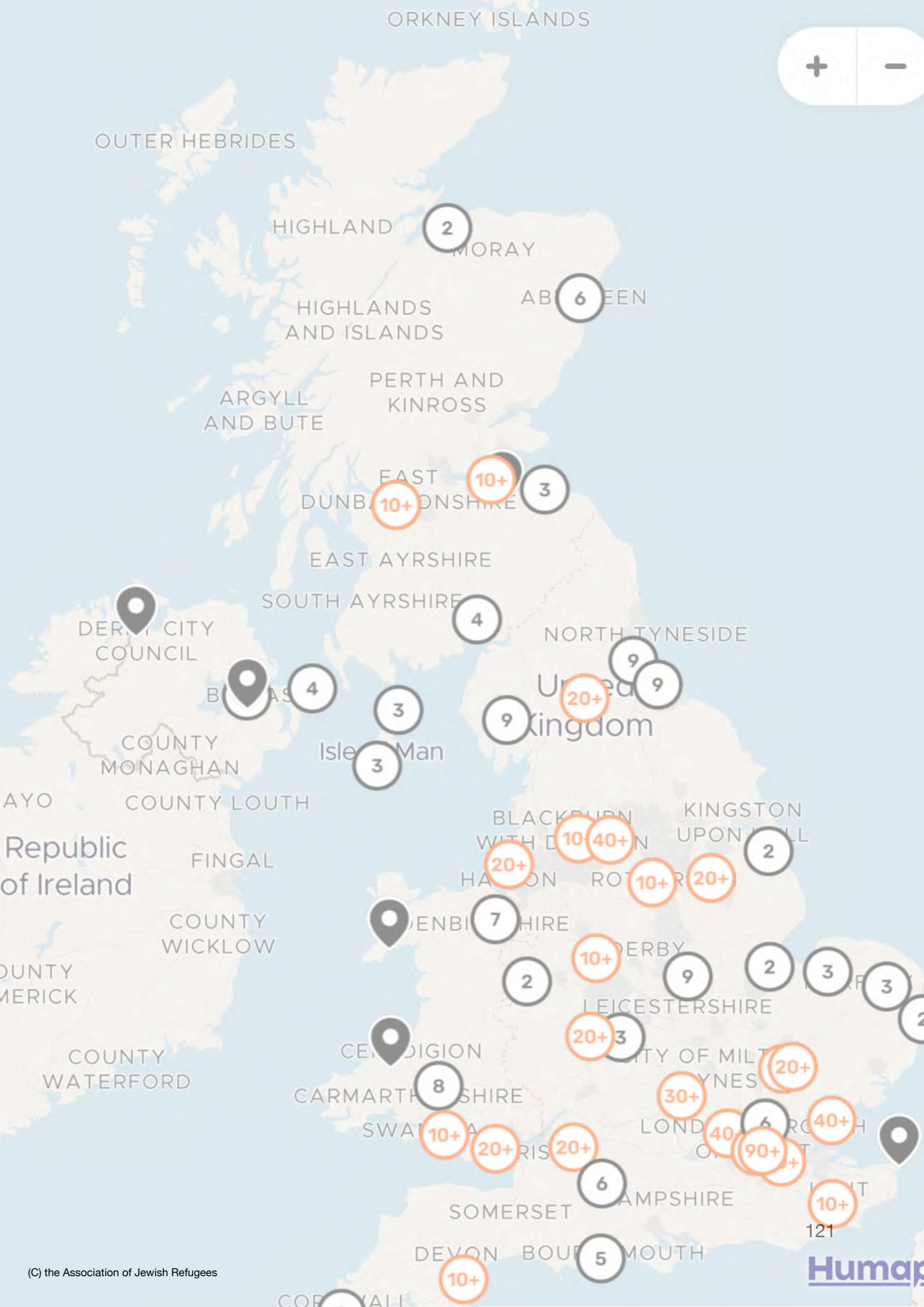
But all in all the boys straightened themselves out and they became all members of Shuls [synagogues], they all married if I remember, they all married Jewish girls, and they were quite useful members here...

Physically and mentally it was the hardest year of my life in that hostel... one boy, he also tried very hard to make something of himself, to learn something, we sent him to college, in the end he got a degree or diploma in engineering. I think the boys, one worked for Halberstadt as a butcher, one became a tailor... a lot of them went into the bag trade, and they made quite a good living out of it. So I think we have done quite a good job with those boys".

Extract from the [AJR's Refugee Voices Archive](#)

Photographed **(top)** Fanny Pine in March 2005 **(middle)** Fanny and Franz Pichower in 1941 **(bottom)** some of the boys (with Franz Pichower on the left) at the hostel in 1946.

All photos (C) the Association of Jewish Refugees





**Could virtual
Holocaust-
related sites
be included in
your visit...?**

Virtual site visits...

thinking about visits to virtual sites as (in)authentic experiences

Following the Covid-19 pandemic many museums and memorials responded to the needs of educators by enhancing their virtual offerings. You should consider how (and if) a virtual interaction will form part of your Holocaust-related site visit, and the different types of virtual visits available.

Should you be engaging with virtual site visits?

Yes. While virtual visits can never be a substitute for in-person visits, they can enhance the experiences of your young people in a number of ways. A particular site, museum, or memorial can only tell a small part of the story of the Holocaust - engaging with other sites online can further enhance and complicate your young people's learning and understandings of the Holocaust.

What types of virtual visits exist?

There are several different types of virtual offering from sites, museums, memorials, and other Holocaust education organisations, including:

1. Online exhibitions

These are not strictly 'visits' as such, but many organisations offer virtual exhibitions, often on particular topics. For example, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a webpage which collates a number of their curated [online exhibitions](#). Topics include Nazi propaganda, the Berlin Olympics in 1936, and the persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945. Similarly, the Wiener Holocaust Library in London has a webpage which collates their [archive of online exhibitions](#). Topics covered include the history of the library (which is the world's oldest Holocaust-related library), Nazi persecution in the Channel Islands, and Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

2. Self-guided virtual site visits

Some Holocaust-related sites offer online access to the spaces in their grounds. Some, such as the [museum on the site of the former Dachau](#)

[concentration camp](#) offer the ability to click on a map of the former site to view information and archival photographs. Others have a '360' capability, where virtual visitors to the site can move the camera angle to look all around them. For example, it is possible to explore the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum online in this way using the [Auschwitz Birkenau Virtual Tour](#) website. This tool enables virtual visitors to look around the site, as well as taking a 'bird's eye view' of certainly spaces. You can also see the view from the guard tower at Auschwitz II Birkenau (a space not often accessible on an in-person tour). A tool such as the Auschwitz Birkenau Virtual Tour could help you to orientate your young people in advance of their in-person visit to the site (which might be particularly beneficial for those with additional needs), and to revisit spaces in your discussions when you return.

Some purpose-built museums (those not built on authentic Holocaust-related sites) also offer virtual walk-throughs of their spaces. For example, the Melbourne Holocaust Museum offers a [Virtual Tour](#) in which virtual visitors can 'walk around' and view the exhibits in lieu of an in-person visit. The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem offers a [virtually rendered space](#) (not of the museum itself) which can also be 'walked around' to learn more about the events of the Holocaust.

3. Guided virtual visits

Another option is for virtual visits where a trained guide is engaged to lead your tour in real time. These can be arranged individually with staff at some sites. For example, the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum has developed the ['Auschwitz in Front of Your Eyes'](#) programme which hosts daily online guided tours in English. The tours last about two hours and are narrated live by a trained museum guide. The tour includes virtual visits to Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II Birkenau, with additional media inserted - such as survivor testimony and archival photographs.

4. Virtual Reality site visits

An increasing number of sites and organisations have begun to employ the capabilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) to add to their virtual visits offers. AI and VR are being used for a variety of reasons, so it is important to think about your **intentions** before using AI or VR-enhanced technology as part of your visit.

Two examples of the use of VR and AI are:

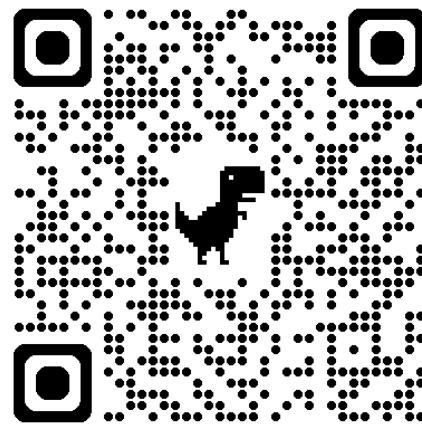
- ▶ The 📍 [‘Visualising Janowska’](#) project at the University of Northumbria, which is carefully recreating the former Janowska concentration camp so that users can learn more about this lesser-known site (which is now in Ukraine).
- ▶ VR and AI technology is used in the Holocaust Educational Trust’s 📍 [‘Testimony 360’](#) programme. Using VR headsets in their own classroom, young people are able to virtually ‘visit’ sites related to the testimony of a Holocaust survivor. This project does not seek to ‘recreate’ anything, it used VR technology to allow participants to ‘see’ the sites as they exist today.

Both of these projects use VR and / or AI technology for educational purposes. Both projects have been careful not to ‘recreate’ spaces in a way that tries to replicate the experiences of those who were there during the war. You need to be very clear with your young people that where VR and AI technologies form part of your visit, they are not recreating something as ‘an experience’, rather they are a tool for helping them better understand the sites.

Visits to virtual sites are (self-evidently) not the same as in-person visits to authentic Holocaust-related spaces - they are visits to constructed (or reconstructed) Holocaust-related spaces. It is important to make this clear to the young people in your group. You need to think carefully about whether to include virtual visits - used without care or due consideration, they risk adding to and compounding misconceptions. Used judiciously, however, they can add an important layer of learning for your young people.

5. Mobile apps

There are a number of apps for mobile devices that can also help your young people explore sites (both in-person and remotely). For example, the 📍 [Oshpitzin app](#) is available free from the 📍



QR code link to the AJR ‘My Story’ archive

[Oshpitzin Jewish Museum](#) in the city of Oświęcim (the city that was renamed ‘Auschwitz’ by the Nazis). The app enables the user to discover the Jewish past of the city both inside the physical museum, and while walking around the town. Through the app, visitors can explore personal stories, documents, objects, and photographs from the past. Contemporary locations can also be viewed with historic photographs superimposed on them using Augmented Reality (AR).

Similarly, the 📍 [ARt Dachau](#) app employs AR to help visitors explore the site of the former concentration camp through 22 drawings and paintings created by artists and former prisoners. The app includes audio clips, as well as extracts from graphic novels created by artists and the descendants of former prisoners.

If you are planning on using mobile apps during site visits, there are a number of things to consider first. These include:

- ▶ accessibility - will all of your young people be able to access the app at the site? You may need to consider providing devices for everyone, or addressing specific additional needs of individuals in your group.
- ▶ content - what does the app add to your visit? Is it a focus of your educational content, or could it just be a distraction?
- ▶ alternatives - what are your alternatives in case the app doesn’t work, if it is raining, or if your mobile data connection is poor?

The 📍 [Landecker Digital Memory Lab](#) is a centre dedicated to ‘ensuring a sustainable future for digital Holocaust memory’. The Lab’s website contains a wealth of information about the inclusion of digital technologies in Holocaust memory and education.



Checklist

- ☐ Have you thought about how you might include local Holocaust-related sites in your planning?
- ☐ How can you make explicit links between the local site(s) and the site(s) you are visiting abroad?
- ☐ Is there testimony that you can include that links the local site(s) with the site(s) abroad?

- ☐ Have you thought about how you might include virtual Holocaust-related sites, websites, or apps in your planning?
- ☐ Have you thought about why you are using the virtual technology - how can the virtual technology enhance your site visit abroad and your young people's learning?

What's next for sites?

thinking about the future of Holocaust-related sites and climate concerns

The Holocaust-related sites we visit today have survived and/or evolved over many decades, and have withstood significant climate change. We need to consider the future of such sites - their protection and preservation, alongside wider considerations around the environment.

? What is being done to protect Holocaust-related sites?

Many museums, sites, governments, and organisations are working hard to protect and preserve Holocaust-related sites for the future. For example, in 2023 the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) published [The IHRA Charter for Safeguarding Sites](#). The Charter sets out good practice principles and responsibilities for safeguarding sites. It can be interesting to discuss the future of such sites with your young people, and how they think they should be protected and preserved.



What can your group do to minimise your impact on the site and the environment?

As an example, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum welcomed just over 2 million visitors from around the world. Such numbers of visitors have a significant impact on the site and the environment. Your young people might want to reflect on this, and the impact they are having by visiting. You could discuss with them how they might want to consider the environmental impact of their travel to offset it in some way. You could also discuss the benefits (as they see them) of visiting the site(s) in-person, against the environmental impact of your travel to and from the site(s). *After all, they will be part of the next generation tasked with safeguarding these vital sites of evidence of the Holocaust for the future...*



We hope that this resource pack has been useful for you in planning and preparing for a visit to Holocaust-related sites with young people.

If you have any feedback about the resource, or for further advice, please contact aldasair.richardson@winchester.ac.uk or the AJR directly.



section six

research-informed practice

What is the research underpinning this guide & where can I read more...?

Key:



Focus research



Book.



Academic journal article.



Weblink



Find out more about...

Learning & teaching about the Holocaust

There are many examples of excellent practice in learning and teaching about the Holocaust from the UK and around the world. Drawing from this extensive research and experience base will help inform your decision making about what is best for your young people and your visit.

➔ The [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#) was founded in 1998 and is an intergovernmental organisation of 35 member countries (including the UK) and a further nine observer countries. The IHRA published a set of [‘Recommendations for Teaching and Learning About the Holocaust’](#) (IHRA, 2019). Developed by the IHRA's international experts, based on research from around the world, the purpose of the recommendations is to support educators in (1) understanding why learning and teaching about the Holocaust is important, (2) choosing appropriate resources, and (3) developing a research-informed curricula for their students.

Further reading:

-  Cowan, P. and H. Maitles, Eds. (2012). [Teaching Controversial Issues in the Classroom - Key issues and debates](#). London, Continuum International Publishing Group.
-  Foster, S., et al. (2016). [What Do Students Know and Understand About the Holocaust? Evidence from English Secondary schools](#). London, UCL.
-  Foster, S., et al. (2020). [Holocaust Education: Contemporary challenges and controversies](#). London, UCL Press.
-  Gray, M. (2015). [Teaching the Holocaust: Practical approaches for ages 11-18](#). London, Routledge.
-  Haward, T. (2020). "How Do Students Engage with Visual Sources in the Teaching and Learning of History?" [British Educational Research Journal](#) 46(2): 364-378.
- ➔ IHRA (2019). [Recommendations For Teaching and Learning About The Holocaust](#).
-  Kempner, J. (2023). "Classroom culture and cultures in the classroom: Engagement with holocaust education in diverse schools." [Holocaust Studies](#) 29(2): 275-296.
-  Pearce, A. and A. Chapman (2017). "Holocaust education 25 years on: challenges, issues, opportunities", Routledge.
-  Pettigrew, A. (2017). "Why teach or learn about the Holocaust? Teaching aims and student knowledge in English secondary schools." [Holocaust Studies](#) 23(3): 263-288.



Find out more about...

Visiting Holocaust-related sites with young people

There is a wealth of research in the fields of education and museum studies, some of which focuses on Holocaust-related museum sites.

- ➔ Interviewing a small sample of teenagers after a visit to Poland, **Richardson (2021)** identified a number of common themes in their experiences. These included their motivations for visiting and the impact that hearing from a Holocaust survivor (as part of their programme) had on them. The young people spoke specifically about each of the sites they visited in Poland: (1) learning about pre-war Jewish life in the town of Oświęcim the young people reflected on the geography of the town and the proximity of the nearby Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz Birkenau (2) during their visit to the museum that now sits on the site of the former Nazi camp, the young people reflected on their experiences of being guided there, and the physicality of the site. Throughout their recollections, their emotional engagement with the sites appeared to be key in their learning experiences.

Further reading:



Bormann, N. (2018). *The Ethics of Teaching at Sites of Violence and Trauma - Student encounters with the Holocaust*. New York, Springer Nature.



Cowan, P., & Maitles, H. (2011). 'We saw inhumanity close up'. What is gained by school students from Scotland visiting Auschwitz? *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43(2), 163–184.



Maitles, H. and P. Cowan (2012). "'It reminded me of what really matters': teacher responses to the Lessons from Auschwitz Project." *Educational Review* 64(2): 131-143.



Popescu, D. I. (2022). *Visitor Experience at Holocaust Memorials and Museums*, Abingdon, Oxon UK, Routledge.



Richardson, A. (2021). "Site-seeing: reflections on visiting the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum with teenagers." *Holocaust Studies* 27(1): 77-90.



Richardson, A. (2023). "Did You Have a Good Trip?" Young people's reflections on visiting the Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum and the town of Oświęcim. *Visitor Experiences at Holocaust Memorials and Museums*. D. I. Popescu. Abingdon, Oxon UK, Routledge: 210-223.



Find out more about...

Including Holocaust testimony

We are fortunate to have a wealth of first-hand survivor testimony available to us as educators. There are thousands of books and diaries, as well as audio and video recordings, with an increasing number of digital and interactive testimonies now available. Many academics have written about the nature of testimony, and critically evaluated how it has been shared, received, and evolved over time.



Holocaust survivors have been giving their testimony in-person in schools and other educational settings for decades. **Richardson (2021)** considers the nature of these encounters from the young people's perspectives. The participants in this study were hearing from a survivor as part of an educational programme that included a visit to the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum. The author found that the young people experienced their encounter with the survivor speaker on three levels: (1) as a concrete encounter - ie, one that was more distinctive than simply reading the testimony, (2) as a connecting encounter - ie, one where the young people felt they had developed a real connection with the speaker, and (3) as a current encounter - ie, one that had contemporary relevance for them and called on them to 'do something' in response. The study made a number of recommendations in light of the findings, including the importance of preparing young people adequately before they hear from a survivor.

Further reading:



Greenspan, H. (2010). On listening to Holocaust survivors: Beyond testimony, St. Paul MN, Paragon House.



Haas, B. J. (2020). "Bearing Witness: Teacher Perspectives on Developing Empathy through Holocaust Survivor Testimony." The Social Studies 111(2): 86-103.



Hirsch, M. 2012. The Generation of Postmemory - Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust, New York, Columbia University Press.



Richardson, A. (2021). Touching distance: young people's reflections on hearing testimony from Holocaust survivors. *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 20(3), 315–338.



Treize, T. (2013). Witnessing Witnessing: On the reception of Holocaust survivor testimony. New York, Fordham University Press.



Wieviorka, A. (1994). On Testimony. Holocaust Remembrance - The shapes of memory. G. H. Hartman. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers.



Shandler, J. (2017). Holocaust Memory in the Digital Age: Survivors' Stories and New Media Practices. California, Stanford University Press.



Find out more about...

Reflection & commemoration at sites

Acts of memorialisation or commemoration often form part of visits to Holocaust-related sites. These might be religious or non-religious in character, and often serve to 'bring together' groups during visits for a time of reflection.

➔ **Richardson (2021)** asked young participants and their educators to reflect on their experiences of a memorial service during a visit to Poland and the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum. The study found there was a general consensus that a ceremony such as this was an important and appropriate way to end a day visit to Poland and the museum. The research suggested that educators should particularly consider the content and context of such services, as well as the emotional engagement of their young people. The study made several recommendations to support educators in providing effective reflective spaces for young people visiting Holocaust-related sites.

Further reading:



Clifford, R. (2013). Commemorating the Holocaust: The Dilemmas of Remembrance in France and Italy, Oxford University Press.



Dekel, I. (2014). "Jews and Other Others at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin." Anthropological Journal of European Cultures 23(2): 71-84.



Jilovsky, S. (2017). Remembering the Holocaust - Generations, witnessing and place. London, Bloomsbury.



Pearce, A. (2020). "Marginalisation Through Commemoration: Trends and practices in Holocaust education in the United Kingdom." War & Society 39(3): 215-220.



Richardson, A. (2021). "Lighting Candles in the Darkness: An Exploration of Commemorative Acts with British Teenagers at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum." Religions 12(29).



Young, J. E. (1994). "Jewish Memory in Poland", in Holocaust Remembrance - The shapes of memory. G. H. Hartman. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers: 215-231.



Statutory Guidance on Collective Worship in schools:

England:  Collective worship in schools (1994)

England:  Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools (2012)

Scotland:  Curriculum for Excellence: religious observance (2017)

Wales:  Religious Education and Collective Worship (1994)

Wales:  Guidance on collective worship - Wales Association of SACREs (2012)



Find out more about...

Emotional engagement & 'dark tourism'

Holocaust-related sites have become sites of 'dark tourism' - spaces where acts of genocide have occurred that people now visit for various, often complex, reasons.

➔ In her edited collection on visitor experiences at Holocaust memorials and museums, **Popescu (2022)** drew together scholarship from disciplines as diverse as museum studies, digital Holocaust studies, education, and others, to consider a range of visitor experiences at various sites. In Part 1, the writers considered visitor experiences in specific museum spaces in the UK and around the world, such as the Topography of Terror in Berlin. Part 2 considered engagement in digital / virtual spaces, while the research collected in Part 4 examined visitors' experiences at memorial sites, such as the sites of former Nazi concentration camps (including the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum, and the Treblinka Museum). Three themes emerged from the various studies - the role that emotion played in visitor encounters, the transformative impact of the visits, and the agency of the visitor during their visit (how they responded to, and interacted with, the sites).

Further reading:

- 🔍 Keil, C. (2005). "Sightseeing in the mansions of the dead." Social & Cultural Geography 6(4): 479-494.
- 🔍 Kerr, M. M. and R. H. Price (2016). "Overlooked encounters: young tourists' experiences at dark sites." Journal of Heritage Tourism 11(2): 177-185.
- 📖 Lennon, J. and M. Foley (2000). Dark Tourism - The Attraction of Death and Disaster, Cengage Learning EMEA.
- ➔ Popescu, D. I. (2022). Visitor Experience at Holocaust Memorials and Museums, Taylor & Francis.
- 📖 Bormann, N. (2018). The Ethics of Teaching at Sites of Violence and Trauma - Student encounters with the Holocaust. New York, Springer Nature.
- 📖 Rapson, J. (2012). "Emotional memory formation at former Nazi concentration camp sites" in M. Robinson and D. Picard (Eds) Emotion in motion: Tourism, affect and transformation. Farnham, Surrey, Ashgate: 161-178.
- 📖 Robinson, M. and D. Picard (2016). Emotion in motion: Tourism, affect and transformation, Routledge.



Find out more about...

The Holocaust as a 'contested space'

Like the concepts of 'space' and 'place', the idea of 'contested space' comes from the academic field of Geography.

➔ Alongside the main exhibitions at the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial Museum, there are a number of 📍 National Exhibitions created by countries whose citizens had been victims of the former Nazi camp. Over time, these exhibits have evolved as national and international perspectives and historical research have shifted. **Richardson (2023)** considered two of these exhibitions (France in Block 20 and the Netherlands in Block 21) as 'contested spaces' of national (and international) Holocaust memory. By considering how shared themes were represented within the two differing national contexts, the author theorised that the National Exhibitions should form a vital part of any educational tour of the site. He suggested that rather than ignoring these blocks, educators should embrace these complex sites to help their young people better understand the nature of memory.

Further reading:

- 🔍 Charlesworth, A. (1994). "Contesting Places of Memory: The case of Auschwitz." Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 12: 579-593.
- 📖 Cole, T. (2000). Selling The Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler. How history is bought, packaged, and sold. New York, Routledge.
- 🔍 Morrissey, M. and F. Gaffikin (2006). "Planning for Peace in Contested Spaces." International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 30(4): 873-893.
- 📖 Purbrick, L., et al. (2007). Contested Spaces: Sites, representations and histories of conflict. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- 🔍 Richardson, A. (2012). Holocaust Education: An investigation into the types of learning that take place when students encounter the Holocaust. Brunel University Research Archive, Brunel University: 1-228.
- ➔ Richardson, A (2023) 'Crossing Borders: Conceptualising National Exhibitions as Contested Spaces of Holocaust Memory at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum' Education Studies, (13) 703
- 🔍 Stein, A. (1998). "Whose Memories? Whose Victimhood? Contests for the Holocaust frame in recent social movement discourse." Sociological Perspectives 41(3): 519-540.



Find out more about...

The 'emotional labour' of visiting Holocaust-related sites

Research in the field of 'emotional labour' originates from studies into working conditions in service industries (such as travel and tourism). Since then, the theory of 'emotional labour' has been applied to a variety of different workplaces, including education.

➔ **Richardson (2021)** applied the theory of 'emotional labour' to explore the experiences of educators involved in site-based learning at Holocaust-related sites (in this case, specifically at the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial & Museum). The study asked the educators to reflect on their 'emotion work' undertaken while accompanying groups of teenagers at the site. The study revealed a complex interplay of emotion work and self preservation - resulting in the educators needing to withdraw (or be 'less present') at certain sites in an effort of self-protection and putting the needs of the young people in their care above themselves. Richardson found that educators accompanying these site visits engaged in various routines during (and in the days surrounding) their visits to manage the emotional impact of the work. For example, some educators wore particular clothing for the visits (which they did not wear for other activities or visits), or needed time after the visit to emotionally decompress and take care of themselves.

Further reading:

🔍 Anttila, E., et al. (2018). "Emotional labour in a school of individuals." Pedagogy, Culture & Society 26(2): 215-231.

🔍 Hochschild, A. R. (1979). "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure." American Journal of Sociology 85(3): 551-575.

📖 Hochschild, A. R. (2012). The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling. London, University of California Press.

🔍 Jeftić, A. (2020). "'I Was Close to Them': Re-experiencing war through trauma-based interviews." Social Epistemology 34(1): 79-85.

🔍 Kitching, K. (2009). "Teachers' negative experiences and expressions of emotion: Being true to yourself or keeping you in your place?" Irish Educational Studies 28(2): 141-154.

➔ Richardson, A. (2021). "'We Too Find It Difficult': A Consideration of Site-Based Holocaust Education as Emotional Labour." History Education Research Journal 18(2): 247-263.

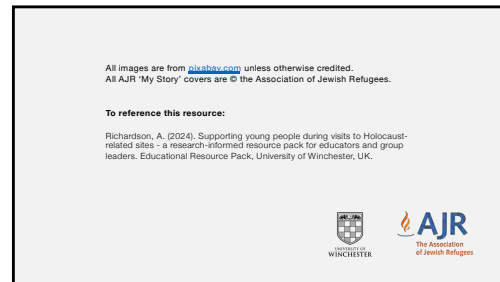


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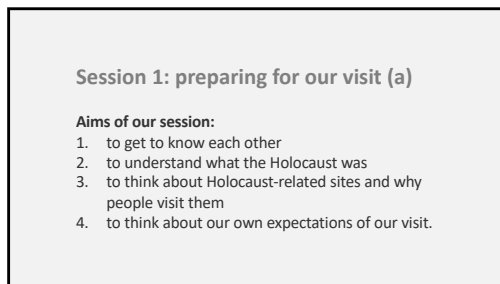
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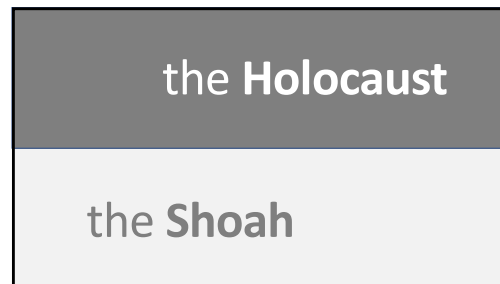
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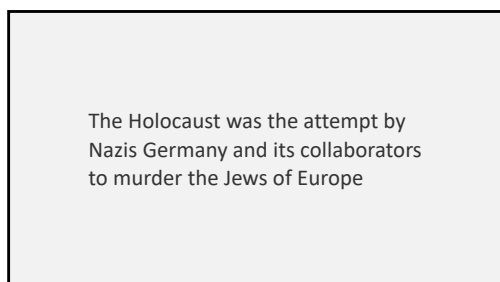
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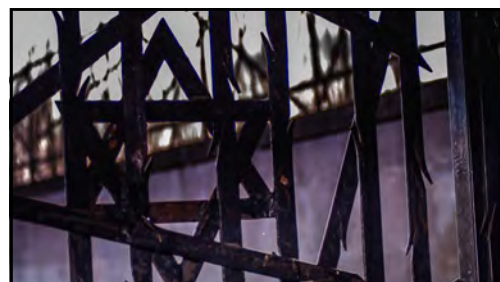
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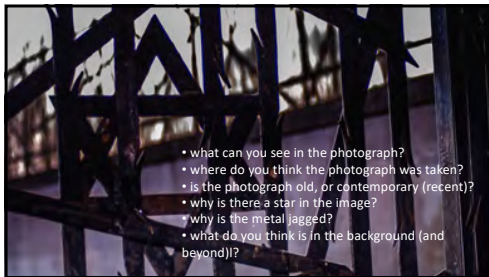
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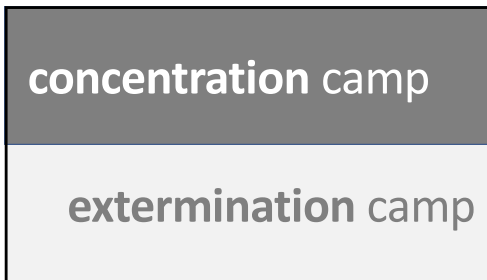
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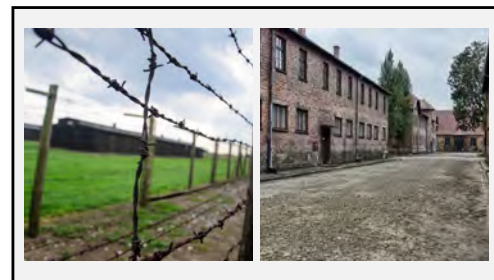
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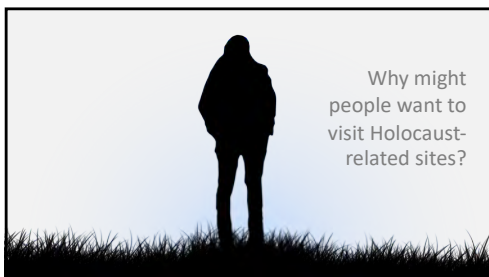
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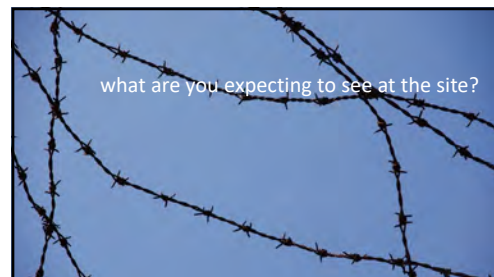
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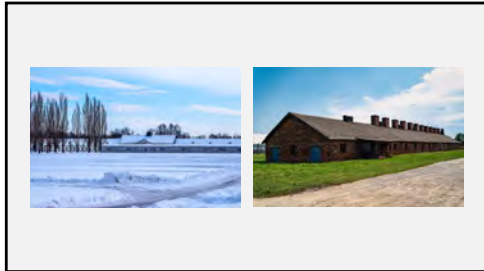
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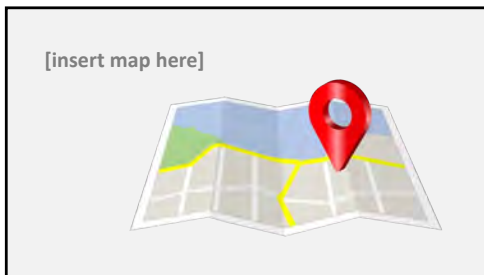
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13



14



15

What have we achieved?

- we have got to know each other as a group before our visit.
- we understand what the Holocaust was and how it is distinct from other forms of Nazi persecution.
- we understand that there were different types of camps across Europe.
- we understand some of the reasons why people might visit Holocaust-related sites.
- we have thought about our own expectations of the site(s) we are going to visit.
- We have looked at some pictures / maps of the sites we are going to visit.

16

Session 2: preparing for our visit (b)

Aims of our session:

1. to think about how people might feel at the site(s) we are going to visit
2. to think about how we can support each other during our visit.

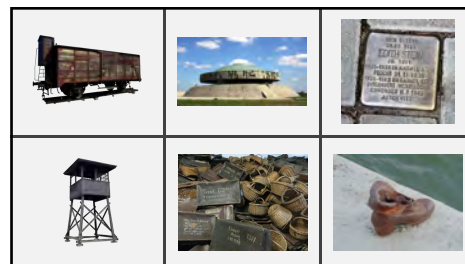
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How might people feel when they visit Holocaust-related sites?

18

sad	overwhelmed	happy	inspired
tired	angry	grateful	interested
scared		proud	

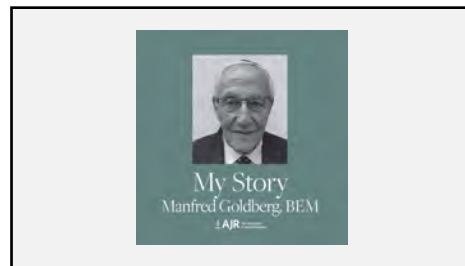
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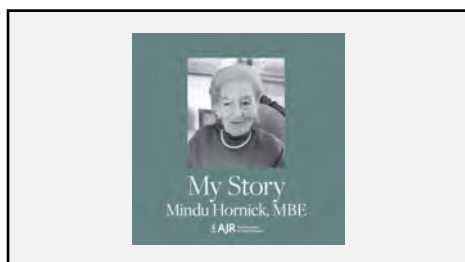
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23



24

how can we support
each other?

25

What have we achieved?

- we have thought about some of the different feelings people might have when they visit Holocaust-related sites
- we have thought about how we can support each other during our visit.

26

Session 5: reflecting on our visit

Aims of our session:

1. to reflect together on our experiences of visiting Holocaust-related sites

27

“did you have
a good trip?”

28



29

What have we achieved?

- we have reflected together on our experiences of visiting Holocaust-related sites

30

Session 6: acting on our visit

Aims of our session:

1. to consider different ways in which you could respond to your visit to a Holocaust-related site.

31



My Story
Julia and Janos Fisher
AJR

"I have done a lot of voluntary work and stood up for a lot of causes. It helps make me feel part of the community".
"My Story, Julia and Janos Fisher" (p41)

32



My Story
Frank Leigh
AJR

"I have a message for future generations: the world needs a lot of tolerance for other peoples' ways, opinions, and manners. That would be marvellous, and then there would be no wars".
"My Story, Frank Leigh" (p62)

33



My Story
Gabriele Keenaghan BEM
AJR

"I sincerely hope that my talks and the telling of my story in this book will evoke kindness, tolerance and acceptance of diversity in other people, of whatever age they may be".
"My Story, Gabriele Keenaghan BEM" (p63)

34

what could you do?

work with a Holocaust education charity	work with a charity	create a monument to victims of the Holocaust
visit more Holocaust-related sites	invite a Holocaust survivor in to speak	organise an activity for Holocaust Memorial Day
give a presentation about your visit	write an article about your visit	learn more about the Holocaust or subsequent genocides
	fundraise for a charity	

35

What have we achieved?

Aims of our session:

- we have considered different ways in which we could respond to our visit to a Holocaust-related site.

36



My Story
Anita Grant
AJR

"It is hard to believe the Holocaust happened or understand how... I want to tell future generations to make peace. People are being hounded out of their homes and having to go to other countries, as I did. There are refugees all over the world. It's a very hard task – and, to be honest, I fear it may never, ever happen – but I still hope there will be peace in the world".
"My Story, Anita Grant" (p62)

37





About the AJR

Founded in 1941 by Jewish refugees from Central Europe, The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) is the national charity representing and supporting Holocaust refugees and survivors living in Great Britain. Primarily delivering social, welfare and care services, the AJR has a nationwide network of regional groups offering members a unique opportunity to socialise in their local area. Members receive support from volunteers and can obtain advice and assistance on welfare rights as well as on Holocaust reparations.

The AJR is committed to the education of future generations about the Holocaust and is now the UK's largest benefactor of education and memorialisation programmes and projects which promote teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

About 70,000 refugees, including approximately 10,000 children on the *Kindertransport*, arrived in Great Britain from Nazi-occupied Europe in the 1930s. The AJR extends membership to anyone who fled a Nazi-occupied country as a Jewish refugee or who arrived in Great Britain as a Holocaust survivor. We also welcome the descendants and spouses of the refugees as members.

