

Remembering the Holocaust

ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNERS

ACTIVITY 1

a) Read the information about the Cardiff Reform Synagogue Holocaust Memorial Tablet and the tree planted at Llanwrtyd Wells.

Holocaust Memorial Tablet



[Cardiff Reform Synagogue Holocaust Memorial Tablet, 2019.¹](#)

Image: Jewish History Association of South Wales/Cymdeithas Hanes Iddewig De Cymru (JHASW/CHIDC).

On the back wall of the Cardiff Reform Synagogue, illuminated by a light that is never extinguished, is a Memorial Tablet erected in memory of the relatives of synagogue members who were murdered in the Holocaust and whose graves are unknown. Discussions

¹ This image is the last one in the sequence of 11 images.

about the creation of the Tablet began in 1952, and it was completed with 54 names in April 1954 and installed in the synagogue. In 1999, the Tablet was renovated, and a further 48 names were added. The work was completed by October 2000.

Llanwrtyd Wells



Tree planted at Llanwrtyd Wells, the location of the Czechoslovak State School from 1943-45, as part of the 80th anniversary celebrations of The Association of Jewish Refugees.

Images: Morris Brodie.

Between 1943 and 1945, the Czechoslovak government-in-exile established a secondary school for refugees at the Abernant Lake Hotel in Llanwrtyd Wells. Around 140 pupils were taught at the Czechoslovak State School, mostly from Jewish backgrounds.

b) Working in pairs or small groups, consider and discuss:

- Why should we commemorate those who died in the Holocaust?
- What form could the commemoration take? (For example, artworks, statues, tablets, poetry)?

ACTIVITY 2

a) Watch a clip of [Councillor Rod McKerlich, the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, speaking at the Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony in Cardiff City Hall in January 2022.](#)

Oral History transcript:

We recognise that the Holocaust shook the foundations of modern civilisation. Its unprecedented character and horror will always hold universal meaning. We believe the Holocaust must have a permanent place in our nation's collective memory. We honour the survivors still with us and reaffirm our shared goals of mutual understanding and justice. We must make sure that future generations understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences. We vow to remember the victims of Nazi persecution, and of all genocide. We value the sacrifices of those who have risked their lives to protect or rescue victims as a touchstone of the human capacity for good in the face of evil. We recognise that humanity is still scarred by the belief that race, or religion, or disability, or sexuality, make some people's lives worth less than others. Genocide, antisemitism, racism, xenophobia, and discrimination still continue. We have a shared responsibility to fight these evils. We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education and research about the Holocaust, and other genocides. We will do our utmost to make sure that the lessons of such events are fully learned. We will continue to encourage Holocaust Remembrance by holding an annual United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Day. We condemn the evils of prejudice, discrimination and racism. We value a free, tolerant and democratic society.

b) Consider and discuss in small groups:

- According to Councillor McKerlich, why is it important to remember the Holocaust?
- Do you know of any Holocaust Memorial Day events in your school or local area?
- Is it important to have a Holocaust Memorial Day? Why?

ACTIVITY 3

a) Read a short biography of Ellen Davis:

Ellen Davis was born Kärry Wertheim in 1929 in Hoof, central Germany. During the 1930s, she was beaten by the Gestapo and Hitler Youth and forced from her home into an orphanage with her younger brothers and sisters. The orphanage was attacked during *Kristallnacht*² and Ellen was sent to Britain on the *Kindertransport*³, but her family was forced to stay behind. She was adopted by a couple in Swansea. In 1941, she received a letter from the Red Cross saying that her mother and siblings had been deported to Latvia and killed. The letter was destroyed when her foster parents' house was bombed during the Swansea Blitz. Her father had escaped to Britain but was deported to Australia aboard the *HMT Dunera* in 1940. She never saw him again.

² United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Kristallnacht* (2019)

<<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kristallnacht>> [accessed 24 August 2022].

³ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Kindertransport* (2021)

<<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kindertransport-1938-40>> [accessed 24 August 2022].

b) Watch a clip where [Ellen Davies talks about remembering the Holocaust](#).

Oral History Transcript:

And I found such joy, because the exhibition wasn't an Anne Frank exhibition, it was the rise of National Socialism, the rise of Hitler, all my lifetime, and then, coming back to what is yet to come. And I have to explain to these children, you can't...this is not my story, this is the Anne Frank story, so you can't put yourself...you can't just tell them your story, so...there's certain parts where you can say, you know, Hitler is supposed to...there's one photograph, Hitler with...with a child, Hitler loves children. And I turn round to...to the groups I have and I say, "Out of six million, I can't tell you how many of those were children, but I can tell you how many out of one family died." And I say, "That's my family. Out of seven children," I say, "six died." And the look on those faces. And then you come to Kristallnacht, when I explain, I was...we were actually in a synagogue that they were burning. The fact that the dates didn't matter was neither here nor there. And the impression on these children. I mean, I was absolutely exhausted, I was ill right through it, but I have never done anything that I consider so worthwhile. I've...I've got teachers who are asking me when I can speak to the schools, but the thing that came out of this, which is so important to me, I've spent my life talking to God, saying "Why am I alive and the others not?" And only to the end of this exhibition did I realise, I'm here as a teacher to teach these children what not to do in the future, to tell them about the past so the future will not be a repetition of the past.

c) Working in pairs or small groups, consider and discuss:

- Why does Ellen Davis think that the Holocaust should be remembered? Does this differ from what Councillor McKerlich said?
- How important are eyewitness accounts in remembering the Holocaust? How will we commemorate the Holocaust when survivors are no longer alive?

ACTIVITY 4

Working individually, in pairs, or smaller groups, design a Holocaust memorial, which will stand in a local area, e.g., park, school grounds, or town square.

Consider the following questions when designing the memorial:

- What form will the memorial take?
- What size will it be?
- Will it contain any symbols?
- At the site, how will you explain the reason for its creation? If there is going to be a caption, what will it say?

Create a sketch of the memorial and present it to the class. Explain why you have chosen this particular form of remembrance, and what it symbolises.