



HOLOCAUST MUSEUM LA
TEACHER GUIDE AND STUDENT
RESOURCES

Teaching the Holocaust with *Number the Stars* and the Story of the Danish Rescue

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INTRODUCTION

Objectives

The education philosophy of Holocaust Museum LA is to teach about the Holocaust through oral history and primary sources. This guide is intended to engage your students in this important history through Holocaust survivor testimony and historical context to understand the past and build a more dignified future. This lesson uses Lois Lowry's novel *Number the Stars*, primary sources, first-hand survivor accounts, as well as images and stories from Judy Glickman Lauder's *Beyond the Shadows* to showcase the story of the Danish rescue and resistance during the Holocaust. It encourages students to analyze various primary sources such as survivor testimony, artifacts, and photography, helping them develop tools to understanding this difficult history and the important, relevant lessons for today.

Learning Outcomes

- Contextualize *Number the Stars* with nonfiction stories, education materials, and testimony from *Beyond the Shadows*
- Understand how and why the majority of Danish Jews survived the Holocaust
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills by introducing an inquiry-based learning method to students
- Learn how to analyze primary sources along with Holocaust survivor testimony
- Reinforce the importance of using Holocaust education to inspire a more dignified and humane world

Essential Questions

How does teaching *Number the Stars* support Holocaust education for younger audiences?

How can pairing primary sources and first-hand accounts enhance our understanding of fiction?

History of Holocaust Museum LA

Founded in 1961, Holocaust Museum LA is the first survivor-founded and oldest Holocaust museum in the nation and houses the West Coast's largest collection of Holocaust-era artifacts. The Museum continues the founding survivors' mission to commemorate those who perished, honor those who survived, educate future generations about the Holocaust, and inspire a more dignified and humane world.

The Museum teaches students and visitors – both on site and online – the critical lessons and continued social relevance of the Holocaust through customized tours, artifact-rich exhibits, creative programs, and intergenerational conversations with Holocaust survivors. Admission is free for all students and youth 17 and under. The Museum also provides bus transportation grants for schools where field trips would otherwise be cost-prohibitive.

Since opening its permanent home in Pan Pacific Park in 2010, Holocaust Museum LA has welcomed 600,000 visitors to date. Learning from survivor testimony and the Museum's primary sources and educational programming empowers students and public visitors to speak out and stand up to hatred, bigotry, and antisemitism.

THE HOLOCAUST: AN OVERVIEW

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic mass murder of those identified as Jews perpetrated by Nazi Germany, its allies, and collaborators. From their initial rise to power, the Nazis worked to systematically marginalize, segregate, and dehumanize the Jewish population, along with other minority groups, which later manifested in genocide.

While the term "Holocaust" has come to denote the destruction and murder of Jewish communities by Nazi Germany and their allies, the original word holocaust stems from the Greek word for "burnt offering." The term holocaust can also be found in the Biblical text Samuel 1: 7-9 and refers to the consumption of a sacrifice by fire. The Hebrew word for the Holocaust is Shoah, which connotes a calamity, disaster, or destruction that cannot be fully described by human language.

Life Before the Holocaust

For 2000 years after the Jewish people lost their political independence in the Land of Israel, most Jews lived in diaspora as a minority group across the globe. In most cases, they maintained their religious practices and traditions, forming a rich culture in various empires, nations, and states. In 1933, approximately 9.5 million Jews lived in Europe, comprising 1.7% of the total European population. This number represented more than 60% of the world's Jewish population at that time, estimated at 15.3 million. The majority of Jews in pre-war Europe resided in Eastern Europe, with the largest community in Poland, where Jewish communities settled in the 12th century. By 1933, the Jewish population in Poland numbered over three million and comprised roughly 10% of the total Polish population.

The Polish Jewish community, as well as many other Eastern European Jewish communities, was diverse in its traditions and practices. Some families lived secular, urban lives in the largest cities of Eastern Europe, such as Lodz, Warsaw, Kiev, and Vilna, while others lived in smaller towns (communities known as shtetls). In shtetls, members of the community often spoke Yiddish, a language that combines elements of German, Slavic languages, and Hebrew, in addition to Polish and other local languages.

Historically, Jewish communities of the Diaspora have been multilingual, with knowledge of Hebrew (the language of the Bible), the local language of where they lived, and an additional Jewish language. Jewish languages and dialects have existed for more than two millennia, first emerging during the First Temple period (586 BCE) when Jews escaping

wars and destruction in the Land of Israel fled to or were enslaved in other countries. Over the centuries, these local Jewish languages grew in nearly every area of the Jewish Diaspora.

The languages, written mainly in Hebrew letters, are a vibrant mix of local vocabulary with Hebrew and Aramaic words and include unique syntactic structures coupled with distinct expressions and gestures.

Although dwindling with some long-standing Jewish vernaculars on the verge of extinction, Jewish languages can still be found today, including Yiddish, Ladino, Judeo-Arabic, Ge'ez (spoken by Ethiopian Jews), Neo-Aramaic, Judeo-Marathi (spoken by Bene Israel in India), Yevanic (Judeo-Greek), Judeo-Bukharian, Judeo-Georgian, Judeo-Italian, and Judeo-Persian.

Jews throughout history faced persecution, discrimination, limited rights, and even death because of their identity. By the end of the 19th century, the majority of Jews living in Western and Central Europe were emancipated and subsequently granted equal rights. Some Jews continued to live in traditional religious communities, while others assimilated into the urban landscape. Jews had a variety of professions ranging from farmers to doctors, tailors to teachers, and other jobs common at the time. Like their fellow citizens, wealth varied a great deal between Jewish families.

German Jewry

The first Jews settled in Germany in 321 B.C.E. in the city of Cologne on the Rhine River. Under the Roman Empire, Jews were given the same rights as other Roman citizens. When Charlemagne became the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in the mid-8th century, he exempted Jews from military service, allowing Jews to focus on commerce. Under Charlemagne, Jewish communities grew in the cities of Worms and Mainz.

During the Middle Ages, the Jewish communities in Worms, Mainz, and Speyer became centers for study of Jewish law and Bible. During the crusades, the Jewish communities of Germany faced tremendous antisemitism, and approximately 12,000 Jews were killed in the Rhenish cities during the first crusade in 1096. After the crusades, Jews were accused of well-poisoning during the Black Plague and slaughtered again. With the rise of Protestantism in the 16th century, antisemitism persisted, and Jews continued to face discrimination. Occasionally, Jews were even expelled from their homes.

The German Jewish community had been emancipated in 1812 under Prussian rule. Thus, when Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, German

Jews had experienced over a century of equal rights and subsequent assimilation. Many German Jews proudly served in the German Army in World War I. In 1933, the German-Jewish population was about 524,000, which was 0.8% of the total German population; roughly two-thirds of the German Jewish population lived in Berlin.

Nazi Antisemitism: Its History and Conceptualization

The Enlightenment helped improve the lives of the Jews in Germany. As early as 1812, Jews received emancipation under Prussian Rule. However, this newly improved life began to worsen in the mid-eighteenth century when the Christian state was once again acknowledged as the dominant state in Prussia. Jews were considered dissidents and had to register their birth, marriages, and deaths. Jews were also not allowed to hold high military, university, or civil positions.¹

In 1879, the “Berlin Antisemitism Controversy” created modern antisemitism as leading intellectuals and government officials labeled the Jews as a “misfortune” to the German people. Wilhelm Marr began using the term antisemitism in 1879 to refer to the hatred of Jews. The term was also applied to any cosmopolitan ideas such as free trade, civil liberties, and any other liberal and secular policies.

Antisemitism became a central part of the nationalist right group that used it as a unifying ideology for their members. It also unified the Christian movement that believed Jewry would bring an end to religion completely. Judaism was linked to atheism and secularism which came under attack in the late nineteenth century, which reinforced the attack on Judaism. The late nineteenth century also witnessed the incipient antisemitic racial movement called the volkisch movement.² The volkisch movement began when a group of German intelligentsia created the notion that German Jews were different from their neighbors and labeled them as “non-Germans.”

During the First World War, there were German-Jewish soldiers who fought on behalf of Germany. Many Jewish communities joined the nationalist cause and patriotically fought. Toward the end of the war effort, the Jewish community was blamed for the downfall of the German nation. Jews were considered saboteurs, revolutionaries, deserters, and traitors. Following the anger that was aroused by the Treaty of Versailles, the Germans quickly began to circulate a series of exaggerations and lies as they scapegoated the Jews for their failure. Some examples include: that Jews began the war to weaken Germany, the Jews created

¹ <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007173>

² Weir, Todd H. “The Specter of “Godless Jewry”: Secularism and the “Jewish Question” in Late Nineteenth-Century Germany.” *Central European History* (Cambridge University Press / UK) 46, no. 4 (December 2013): 815-849. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed February 13, 2018).

the harsh punishments of the Treaty of Versailles, and the Jews were personally profiting from the reparations being paid to the allies.

The Rise of Nazism: From The End of World War I in 1919 to The Appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor in 1933

The German government was a democracy called the Weimar Republic. In the Republic, democracy, arts, music, and social acceptance flourished, and rights such as freedom of speech and human rights were protected. However, when World War I ended, the Germans were required to pay a large reparation sum to the victorious countries for the war's cost. This, and chronic political instability that arose during the Weimar Republic, plagued Germany in the 1920s and led to economic and social strife throughout the country, which was further exacerbated by the worldwide Great Depression.

In 1921, the National Socialist German Workers Party, or Nazi Party, was founded. The party was explicitly anticommunist and anti-Marxist. It condemned the liberalism of the Weimar Republic and sought for a return to the “authenticity” of Germany. The party valued nationalism, “Aryanism,” and a revival of nativism. The Nazi Party’s popularity within German society varied through the 1920s, but they secured their position in government through a coalition in 1933.

On January 30, 1933, Germany’s President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany, the second most powerful position in the country. Those who opposed Hitler believed that von Hindenburg’s position and power would control and balance the government. Adolf Hitler’s antisemitic ideology was apparent in his writing and speeches before his entrance into the German political sphere. In his 1924 infamous memoir, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote, “...no one need be surprised if among our people the personification of the devil, as the symbol of all evil, assumes the living shape of the Jew.” In his public speeches, Hitler capitalized on Germany’s unstable environment in the 1920s and 30s, blaming Germany’s defeat and failing economy on Liberals, Marxists, and Jews. Hitler asserted his hatred of Jews, whom he considered a “foreign race,” and assured the supremacy of the “Aryan race” and need for racial purity. Hitler and the Nazis found it imperative to reverse the decades of emancipation and assimilation by ostracizing Jews and other minority groups in order to fulfill their objective of creating a commanding, powerful, and “racially pure” German Empire.

While the first use of the term “antisemitism” dates to the 19th century, antisemitic ideas and violence occurred for thousands of years prior, and Jews were often blamed for many social and political problems throughout history, time and again serving as the scapegoat for

countless issues. Perhaps most infamously, the Jewish people collectively received the blame for Jesus's crucifixion — a misconception still held by some today.

During the Crusades, between 1095 and 1291 CE, thousands of Jews were massacred or lost their homes and property. Spanish monarchs, King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabella, expelled Jews who refused to convert during the 15th century Spanish Inquisition, in which a tribunal of the Roman Catholic Church tortured, imprisoned, and burned tens of thousands of Jews at the stake — all in the name of investigating “heresy” against the Church. Jews were considered to be part of the fringes of society until the Enlightenment brought waves of reform and emancipation across Western Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Nazi Propaganda and Discrimination of German Jews

On February 27, 1933, a large fire at the Reichstag (German Parliament building) broke out, giving the government an opportunity to falsely depict the arson as an attempted communist coup. Marinus van der Lubbe, a young Dutch council communist, was caught at the scene of the fire and arrested for the crime. Hitler pressed President von Hindenburg to declare a State of Emergency, suspending civil liberties and freedom of the press, and arresting communists around the country, including 100 communist members of parliament. The suspension of civil rights remained in place until the end of World War II. The Nazis utilized vigorous propaganda to exploit the public fear of a communist take-over and portray Hitler as a protector and savior of Germany. This chain of events allowed Hitler to consolidate his power of this now fascist state, moving the Nazi Party to the majority. To this day, historians suspect that the Nazis orchestrated the arson to seize power.

Hitler's Nazi party perpetuated ideals such as national pride, nativism, and xenophobia along with its virulent anti-communist and antisemitic beliefs, all of which were portrayed as essential elements for the restoration of power to the superior "Aryan" race. To spread these beliefs and ensure public approval, Hitler utilized propaganda through mass media to convince the German people of Nazi ideology. Hitler established a Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, which was led by Joseph Goebbels. Its purpose was to disseminate information through various forms of mass media to influence the general public. Racial superiority was central to these messages, which was supported by the demonization and dehumanization of those that were not descendants of the pure "Aryan" race. A primary focus of attack was the Jewish population, which was made to appear both inferior and dangerous, leading to the population's gradual acceptance of increasingly antisemitic laws, and to use the Jews as a scapegoat for society's issues.

The Nazis successfully communicated their ideology through art, music, rallies, theater, films, books, radio, educational materials, and news. The Nazis censored anything considered “un-German,” and attempted to purge everything that went against Nazi ideology from society. Nazi propaganda targeted all age ranges, backgrounds, and demographics. Propaganda and Nazi ideology permeated throughout German society, and the Nazis ensured that their messages and thoughts reached everyone. For example, the Nazis utilized radio broadcasts as part of their propaganda machine. They created an inexpensive radio called the Volksempfänger (“people’s radio”) to allow the entire community (or “Aryan” German) an opportunity to own a new radio. The Nazis additionally controlled the broadcasting so they could have a direct connection into every home. During the war, it was illegal to listen to foreign news at home, and the Gestapo, the German secret police, would arrest those listening to BBC or radio broadcasting produced by Allied countries (enemies of the German state).

The Nazi Government employed a host of different methods to regulate every aspect of the nation, including individual’s private lives. Furthermore, they capitalized on society's fear to better control the population, and the Gestapo began to heavily rely on informants and civilian denunciations. In his essay, “The Gestapo and German Society,” Robert Gellately explored the role German citizens played in informing the Gestapo on fellow citizens’ criminal activity by analyzing 19,000 surviving Gestapo files. The Gestapo were infamous for their brutality and secrecy, which perpetuated a climate of fear, but lacked sufficient manpower to meticulously police the entire nation. Gellately found that German citizens took it upon themselves to police their neighbors and turn in those they suspected of engaging in anti-Nazi activity, which could be as simple as listening to foreign radio broadcasts.³ This is one of the many ways in which the Nazi government worked to control the information that people accessed and control the allegiance of the population.

Propaganda used negative stereotypes to propagate the Jews as a detested “other.” Jews and other “non-Aryans” were depicted as dangerous enemies of Germany and were made to feel alienated and less than human. The Nazis, notably Heinrich Himmler, one of the leading members of the Nazi Party, often employed rhetoric that compared the Jews to vile vermin such as parasites, pigs, roaches, fleas, and rats. These connections instinctively conjured the association between Jews and parasites that society subsequently needed to exterminate.

³ Robert Gellately, “The Gestapo and German Society: Political Denunciation in the Gestapo Case Files.” *The Journal of Modern History* 60, no. 4 (1988): 654-694

Shortly after Hitler's appointment as Chancellor, the Nazis gradually enacted antisemitic legislation to diminish the lives, humanity, and dignity of Jews and further their exclusion from society. The first law of this nature was the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, which was enacted on April 7, 1933. This law barred Jews from employed positions as civil servants. Subsequent laws in the following months removed German Jews from practicing law and medicine, and limited the number of Jewish students allowed in schools. These laws created a hostile environment and made dehumanization and brutality acceptable in the public eye; even if Jews were not forbidden from attending school or university, they were still targeted for discrimination and subjected to humiliation. For example, by 1934, "Jewish students at the Friedrich Wilhelm University of Berlin had to come to terms with a wide yellow stripe stamped on their matriculation books."⁴ This blatant identification facilitated antisemitism, coupled with rules that required Jewish students to sit on separate benches or in the back of classrooms, resulted in a drop of matriculated Jewish students attending German universities from 3,950 in 1932 to 656 in 1934.

In April of 1933, the Nazis planned a nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses, which ultimately failed to engage the public on a wide scale, signaling to the Nazi government that the larger population did not share in their same deep-seated antisemitism and hate. The Nazis quickly focused on intense propaganda and did not stage another national boycott until 1938; by then, their ideology had permeated German society and this boycott did not fail.

In May of 1933, a nationwide "action against the Un-German spirit" was declared. This resulted in the destruction of all books, artwork, and media that was not in line with the ideologies of the Nazi Party, including all literature and mediums about Judaism, communism, liberal ideas, or any material that contested Nazi ideological beliefs. For example, the books of Sigmund Freud, Erich Maria Remarque, and Helen Keller were included during the massive Nazi book burnings of all literature considered "un-German." The Nazis believed that anyone with a disability was considered "subhuman" and did not fit in with the ideal Aryan members of society. In reversing the previous decades of emancipation and assimilation, the Nazis worked to ostracize the Jewish population, and "ordinary Germans were invited to participate in and profit from the exclusion, expropriation, and expulsion of the unwanted Jews."⁵

In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws were passed, which stripped Jews of their German citizenship, forbade them from flying the national flag, and prohibited them from marrying or having sexual relations with persons of "German or German-related blood." Additional laws took away political

⁴ Francis R. Nicosia and David Scrase, *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany: Dilemmas and Responses* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 21.

⁵ Nicosia and Scrase, *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany*, 117.

rights, including the right to vote and hold public office. The Nuremberg Laws became the ideological cornerstone for the National Socialists, and they were intended to protect the nation and individual Germans from perceived degeneration.

Though targeted violent acts and laws against Jews began in 1933 and continued through the 1930s, the horrifying and unprecedented violence of Kristallnacht, "Night of Broken Glass," was a turning point in Nazi Germany's persecution of their Jewish population. On November 9 and 10, 1938, violent and destructive anti-Jewish pogroms took place throughout Germany and Austria. During this state-sponsored, violent event, rioters destroyed 267 synagogues, looted over 7,500 Jewish owned businesses, and murdered 91 Jews. As synagogues and Jewish property burned, fire departments were instructed not to assist unless the fires endangered any Aryan buildings. Approximately 30,000 Jewish men were rounded up and deported to Dachau, the first concentration camp created in 1933 to detain political prisoners, and other camps including Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. Their release was contingent on money and papers produced by their families indicating they would leave Germany or Austria. Kristallnacht marked the first instance in which the Nazi regime incarcerated Jews on a massive scale. This unprecedented and wide-scale violence signified the danger for Jews remaining in Germany. Many of the Jewish men who were able to return from the concentration camps were despondent and desperate to get their families out of the country.

In response to the brutality of Kristallnacht, several organizations worked together to bring Jewish children under Nazi occupation to safety in England. Roughly 10,000 Jewish children from Germany, Austria, parts of Czechoslovakia, and parts of modern-day Poland were sent to England on Kindertransports ("children's transports"). The first train carrying refugee children left Berlin on December 1, 1938. The vast majority of the rescued children never saw their families again. The Kindertransports operated until the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939.

The Outbreak of War and Genocide

On August 23, 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed a Nonaggression Pact (the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact) that guaranteed neither country would attack the other and laid out the division of an occupied Poland.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and two days later, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, beginning World War II. Fighting a two-front war, the Polish army was defeated in less than a month, and Poland was partitioned between Germany and the

Soviet Union, as agreed upon in the Non-Aggression Pact. At the time of the invasion, there were roughly 3 million Polish Jews living in Poland, making up 10% of the total population.

In response to the large number of Jews under their authority, the Nazis began the process of ghettoization, establishing the first ghetto in Piotrków Trybunalski, Poland in October 1939. Jews from smaller towns and villages were brought to more populated areas where ghettos had been established, allowing the Nazis more control and authority over the Jewish populations. Daily life in the ghettos was horrid, as families were crowded together in unsanitary apartments, food was limited, and diseases ran rampant. Starvation, inadequate health care, extreme overcrowding, deadly diseases such as dysentery and typhus, and severe weather caused hundreds of thousands of deaths.

In the spring of 1940, Germany began its assault on Western Europe and invaded Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. In June 1940, France signed an armistice with Germany, allowing the German occupation of the northern half of the country, while the southern half of France remained under control of the collaborating Vichy government. The armistice remained until November 1942, when German troops invaded and occupied the area.

Germany broke the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact on June 22, 1941 and invaded the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa. Hitler and the Nazi elite viewed this war not only as a territorial battle between countries, but as a racial war between the "Aryans" and those regarded as "subhuman." Thus, under the cover of war, the Nazis began the systematic mass murder of European Jews throughout Eastern Europe.

Beginning in the summer of 1941, Einsatzgruppen (Mobile Killing Units) murdered those perceived to be racial or political enemies of Nazi Germany, including Jewish women and children. In the largest single action of these mobile killing squads, Einsatzgruppe C massacred 33,771 Jews in less than three days at Babi Yar, Ukraine, a ravine outside of Kiev, on September 29 and 30, 1941. As the Wehrmacht moved through eastern Europe, Einsatzgruppen units followed them, murdering over one million Jews. Although some Einsatzgruppen units used gas vans, the primary method of murder was through point blank shootings of victims into shallow mass graves. Several reports demonstrated the psychological impact of the shootings on the soldiers themselves, which, in addition to the desire for a more streamlined and efficient method of murder, led the Germans to establish permanent death camp facilities — the first of which opened in December, 1941 in the town of Chelmno.

On January 20, 1942, the chief of the Reich Main Security Office, Reinhard Heydrich, held the Wannsee Conference to direct and coordinate the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." The fifteen mid-

level officials in attendance represented the relevant government industries needed to smoothly organize this plan to systematically murder the European Jewish population. The Final Solution was the term the Nazis used to speak of the systematic, deliberate, physical annihilation of the Jewish population.

To implement the Final Solution, six death camps were built and expanded in different locations in Poland: Chelmno, Belzec, Treblinka, Sobibor, Auschwitz-Birkenau, and Majdanek. Chelmo, as the first permanent death camp, utilized gas vans to asphyxiate victims while gas chambers were built in the other five death camps to speed up the killing process. Jews were deported from the ghettos to transit camps, and from there sent to various concentration camps. Upon arrival to death camps, prisoners were ordered to leave their belongings and strip off their clothes in preparation for showers. They were then assembled in large numbers in the gas chambers, where they were killed within minutes. It is estimated that at the height of the deportations, up to 6,000 Jews were gassed each day at Auschwitz-Birkenau alone. Carbon Monoxide and Zyklon B were used as poisonous gas in these facilities. While Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chelmno, and Majdanek kept some prisoners alive for slave labor in addition to executing large groups of people by gas, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka had no purpose other than mass murder.

The death camp of Sobibor was one of the three Operation Reinhard camps designed to implement the Final Solution. The camp was located in eastern Poland in the small village of Sobibor, a wooded and sparsely populated area. The camp was surrounded by trees and a minefield spreading 50 feet in all directions. Jews were deported to Sobibor between 1942 and 1943 from ghettos in Poland, German-occupied Soviet territory, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Bohemia and Moravia, the Netherlands, and France. It is estimated that approximately 250,000 people were killed at Sobibor.

As the systematic mass murder continued, the Allied governments learned of the murderous intentions of Nazi Germany and issued public condemnations in 1942. However, 1942 was the deadliest of the Holocaust, as approximately 2.7 million Jews were murdered that year, and deportations and gassings continued. On October 14th, 1943, the prisoners at Sobibor participated in an uprising and escape at the death camp. Of the prisoners who were able to escape, it is estimated that less than 50 survived. The uprising at Sobibor led the Germans to raze the entire camp to hide evidence of its existence. They tore down the buildings, burned bodies, and ensured that trees were planted to disguise the location as a farm. Additional examples of uprisings and revolts occurred in other killing centers, including Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau. These and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising led Nazi officials to accelerate the killing process, shooting approximately 42,000 Jews on November 3, 1943 in the Lublin District in Poland.

Germany's invasion of its ally, Hungary, on March 19, 1944 drastically changed the situation for Hungarian Jews. With the advancing Soviet Army on the Eastern Front and the military decline of the Third Reich, the Nazi Government focused on quickly deporting and gassing over 400,000 Hungarian Jews in the time between Hungary's invasion in 1944 and the end of World War II in 1945.

The Conclusion of the War

As the Red Army rapidly advanced on the Eastern Front, the Germans quickly attempted to destroy evidence of mass murder. The Soviets liberated Auschwitz on January 27, 1945. However, the Nazis had bombed the gas chambers and forced the majority of remaining Auschwitz prisoners out of the camp on a westward death march. Thus, Soviet soldiers only found several thousand prisoners when they entered the camp. U.S. forces liberated Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany on April 11, 1945; however, the Nazis had evacuated the camp a few days prior and only 20,000 remaining prisoners were liberated. U.S. forces also liberated Dora-Mittelbau, Flossenbürg, Dachau, and Mauthausen concentration camps. British forces liberated concentration camps in northern Germany, including Bergen-Belsen in mid-April 1945. The camp contained over 60,000 prisoners and most were in critical condition due to starvation, torture, and a rampant typhus epidemic. More than 10,000 of them died from malnutrition or disease within a few weeks of liberation.

Liberators confronted unspeakable conditions in the Nazi camps, such as emaciated prisoners and piles of corpses that laid unburied. Although rumors and information about the brutal mass murders were known as early as 1942, the full scope of horrors were exposed to the world only after liberation. Disease was rampant in the camps and many camp structures had to be burned to prevent the spread of epidemics. Survivors of the camps faced a long and difficult road to recovery. Many survivors ended up in Displaced Persons (DP) Camps following liberation.

Following Germany's surrender in 1945, the Allied forces held a series of military tribunals, the Nuremberg trials, to prosecute high-ranking individuals involved in the political, military, judicial, and economic apparatus of Nazi Germany. Beginning on October 18, 1945 with the indictment of 24 individuals and several organizations, the Nuremberg trials were the first act of legal justice for victims of the Nazi regime. A milestone of contemporary international law, the Nuremberg trials were instrumental in establishing a legal precedent and a historic legacy of holding individual war criminals responsible for their crimes against humanity and creating standards of human rights. The first Nuremberg trial indicted war criminals on four charges: participation in a common

plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of a crime against peace; planning, initiating, and waging wars of aggression and other crimes against peace; war crimes; and crimes against humanity. Twelve of the defendants were sentenced to death, seven more to imprisonment, and three were found innocent and acquitted. Serving as a model, the Nuremberg trials helped establish the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Geneva Convention (1949), and the International Criminal Court (1998).

Life After the Holocaust and Modern Antisemitism

Antisemitism and anti-Jewish sentiment existed before the Holocaust and continues to exist today; even after World War II and the Nuremberg trials made the world aware of the dangers of inhumanity, intolerance, and hatred. After the war, many survivors, unsure of what to do after liberation, returned home to find people living in their homes and using their possessions, forcing survivors to buy back their own family photographs of loved ones who had perished in the Holocaust. Much of this was due to the tremendous antisemitism throughout Eastern Europe that continued following the war. In an extreme case, Polish people murdered 42 returning Holocaust survivors in the town of Kielce in 1946. After the Holocaust, 75,000 of the Jewish survivors who had returned to their hometowns in Poland fled the violence to Displaced Persons camps in Western Europe. Many survivors joined the Brihah movement, which arranged illegal immigration to the British Mandate of Palestine, because they felt that a Jewish homeland would be the only place where they could be safe and live without antisemitism. Thousands of survivors immigrated to Israel when it received its independence in 1948.

In modern times, antisemitism endures, and recently, antisemitism has been on the rise in America, Europe, and the Middle East. In some countries, antisemitism is spread by the government. For example, former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad publicly denied the Holocaust. In Europe, there has also been a rise of far right-wing extremist political parties who view Jews as “others.” There have been several attacks on Jews in Europe recently, such as the 2014 attack on a Jewish supermarket in Paris that killed four and the shooting of a security guard at a Danish synagogue in 2015. America has also seen a rise of anti-Jewish sentiment, including vandalism of Jewish synagogues, cemeteries, and on college campuses; a rise in anti-Jewish rhetoric on social media; and the largest antisemitic shooting at a synagogue. On October 27, 2018, 11 Jews were murdered at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. On January 15, 2022, a man took 4 people hostage in Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, because he believed in the anti-Jewish myth that Jews control the world. Sadly, these are not the only examples of violence against Jews in America today.

The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at Cal State San Bernardino found that Los Angeles “recorded the most hate crimes of any U.S. city this century” in 2021 alone. The Anti-Defamation League's recent audit reported a 34% increase in antisemitic incidents nationwide in 2021, averaging 7 antisemitic incidents each day.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF *NUMBER THE STARS*

The history of the Danish Jews dates back to the early 17th century. In 1619, King Christian IV invited Albert Dionis, a Jewish merchant residing in Hamburg, to settle in the newly founded town of Gluckstadt. This invitation, based on a royal dispensation, was then extended to leaders of the Sephardic Jewish community in Amsterdam. Whereas just 85 years earlier, as a result of the Danish Reformation, Jews were prohibited from settling in Danish territory; in 1622 Denmark became the first Scandinavian country to allow Jews to live and work in Gluckstadt, offering them trading privileges and some religious freedom.

The Danish Jewish community continued growing into the 18th century, with a majority of the community living in Copenhagen. During this period, Jewish life in Denmark was fairly vibrant and the Danish authorities were generally tolerant of the Jewish community, allowing rabbis, teachers, and community leaders to practice openly. By the late 18th century, the king of Denmark sought to integrate all Danish subjects into society. This included the Jewish community and as a result, Danish Jews were given equality and able to study at universities, buy land, and join guilds - liberties which were not typically extended to Jews.

Although there was perceptible antisemitism in the air, the 19th century saw the continued progress and acceptance of Danish Jews. In 1814, Danish Jews were granted full citizenship, and 35 years later, in 1849, they were granted political equality. As citizens, the Danish Jewish community grew and flourished in Danish society. Danish Jews were prominent in all aspects of Danish life and a number of Jews served in high offices of the state.

Denmark During and After the War

Prior to Nazi occupation of Denmark on April 9, 1940, the Danish Jewish community numbered approximately 7,500; about 6,000 of whom were Danish citizens while the rest were refugees fleeing anti-Jewish violence.

On September 28, 1943, German diplomat Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz secretly informed the Danish resistance about the upcoming Nazi deportation of the Jewish community. The underground responded quickly, mobilizing a nationwide effort to warn Jews. Community leaders, police, resistance fighters, and everyday people worked together to move Jews into hiding and smuggle them to the port to be ferried to neutral Sweden.

Jews began fleeing Copenhagen, where most of the Jews in Denmark lived, and other cities, by train, car, and on foot. With assistance and a network, they found hiding places in homes, hospitals, and churches. Within a few weeks, fishermen helped ferry some 7,200 Danish Jews and 680 non-Jewish family members to safety across the body of water separating Denmark from Sweden.

The Danish rescue effort was unique because it was successful, community-based, and widely accepted. The Germans did manage to arrest and deport 472 Danish Jews to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where 53 died. Around twenty more died after the escape to Sweden. In total, approximately 77 Danish Jews died during the Holocaust. Denmark's Jewish community has the highest rate of survival by percentage from any country during the Holocaust.

On May 4, 1945, German troops surrendered, and the next day, Denmark was officially free. Jewish Holocaust survivors faced severe economic and emotional difficulties after the war. Jewish families had used their savings, sold valuables and property, and obtained improvised private loans to finance their escape to Sweden. During and after the German occupation, however, Danish authorities worked to ameliorate the consequences of Nazi persecution, and the Danish government implemented one of the most inclusive and comprehensive restitution laws in Europe, taking into account Jewish victims of deportation as well as victims of exile. The Danish state established a system for citizens to claim restitution only a week after the Nazis departed the country.

Timeline of Key Dates

January 30, 1933: President Paul von Hindenburg appoints Hitler chancellor of Germany.

February 27, 1933: The Reichstag (parliament) building goes up in flames. Hitler presents an emergency order that voids important basic civil rights. The number of crimes carrying the death penalty is increased. Police are given more power to detain and imprison suspects.

May 10, 1933: Nazis burn thousands of Jewish-authored and anti-Nazi books.

April 1, 1933: Nazi party members organize a national boycott of Jewish owned business.

April 7, 1933: German Jews are fired from their jobs as civil servants.

April 25, 1933: Jewish students are limited in enrolling in schools through a quota system

October 4, 1933: Jews are forbidden from working as journalists.

January 13, 1935: Nazi Germany makes its first territorial grab with Saar Region from France.

September 15, 1935: The Nuremberg Laws are enacted, stripping German Jews of their citizenship, forbidding them from flying the national flag, and making romantic relationships between Jews and non-Jews illegal.

August 1, 1936: The Summer Olympic games open in Berlin, demonstrating the international acceptance of the Nazi Government.

September 1, 1939: The Germans, in conjunction with the USSR, invade Poland. Great Britain and France declare war, starting World War II.

January 24, 1940: Jewish property is registered in occupied Poland.

April 9, 1940: Germany invades Denmark and Norway. Denmark surrenders immediately. Beginning of the Nazi occupation of Denmark.

May 10, 1940: Germany invades Belgium and the Netherlands.

Jun 14, 1940: Germany occupies Paris.

October 3, 1940: Anti-Jewish Legislation is established in France.

November 15, 1940: The Warsaw Ghetto is sealed with nearly half a million Jews inside.

June 22, 1941: Invasion of the Soviet Union, mass-murder of Jews begins under the cover of war.

December 8, 1941: Chelmno, the first death camp, opens.

August 8, 1942: The US receives information on the Nazis' genocidal plan to mass murder Jews.

August-October 1942: 1.2 million Jews are murdered.

February 2, 1943: The German Army surrenders Stalingrad.

July 10, 1943: The Allies invade Sicily.

August 29, 1943: Danish government resigns. Nazi administration takes over government. Antisemitic measures are implemented.

October 1, 1943: Germans attempt a mass Jewish deportation during Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year). The plan fails since most Danish Jews were alerted to the threat three days prior.

March 19, 1944: Germany invades Hungary, mass deportations of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz-Birkenau follow.

June 6, 1944: Allied armies invade land on Normandy beaches in France.

June 23, 1944: Danish Red Cross delegation visits Theresienstadt to check on their Jewish citizens along with camp living conditions.

July 25, 1944: The Soviet Army liberates the Majdanek Death Camp.

August 7, 1944: Germans deport the remaining Jews in the Lodz Ghetto.

January 27, 1945: The Soviet Army liberates Auschwitz-Birkenau

April 11, 1945: The U.S. Army liberates Buchenwald

April 15, 1945: The British Army liberates Bergen-Belsen.

May 4, 1945: German troops surrendered, and the next day, Denmark was officially free of Nazi German control.

Glossary

Antisemitism: Hostility toward or hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group, often accompanied by social, economic, or political discrimination.

Aryan: The term the Nazis developed to identify their false belief in a “pure, German race.” The term was used to describe non-Jewish German/Austrian objects and belongings such as “aryan homes” and “aryan^[SEP]papers.” Identification papers at that time were required to state a person’s identity as a Jew or non-Jew. For Jewish people to have “aryan papers” meant that they were in possession of false identity papers that did not label them as Jewish. People were required to always carry identification papers and often had to present them to Nazi officials, Gestapo, and police. If identification papers appeared to be questionable, the person could be arrested, interrogated, beaten, or sent to a concentration camp.

Aryanization: The expropriation and plundering of Jewish property by German authorities and their transfer to “aryan” ownership.

Assimilation: The process of which a person or group of people adapt to another culture's way of living and are absorbed into the dominant culture of society. Subsequent to emancipation, Jews, particularly in cities, often culturally assimilated into the way of life and traditions of the dominant groups around them.

Child Survivor: A child survivor is an individual who was under the age of 18 either at the start or end of the Holocaust and survived under extraordinary circumstances.

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

Concentration Camp: Concentration camps served many different functions, but they were all part of the overarching objective to murder the European Jewish community. Concentration camps included transit camps, forced labor camps, and death camps. These were places of intense dehumanization, maltreatment, and death. Historians estimate that there were over 40,000 ghettos and camps across Europe.

Death Camp: The Nazis established 6 death camps, all of which were in Poland (Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor, Belzec, Treblinka, and Auschwitz-Birkenau). People were murdered at all camps, but at death camps, people were taken en masse straight from arrival to be murdered.

Deportation: Forced transfer of Jews to ghettos, concentration camps, or killing centers. When being deported long distances, Jews were generally forced in cattle cars without food, water, proper ventilation, or toilets.

Discrimination: Action based on prejudice or racist beliefs that results in unfair treatment of individuals or groups; unjust conditions in areas such as employment, housing, and education.

False Papers: In the context of the Holocaust, false papers were forged identity documents used for the sake of posing as a non-Jew. Creating false papers was obviously illegal and very risky.

The “Final Solution” (Endlösung): A Nazi euphemism for the mass murder of the Jewish people.

Genocide: The deliberate and systematic attempted annihilation of a national, racial, ethnic, or religious group of people.

Gestapo: The German Secret State Police under SS control. Established in 1933, the Gestapo was an infamously brutal and feared body, using informants, surveillance, and torture. Their charge was to investigate political crimes and opposition activities, arresting actual and perceived enemies without judicial review as well as coordinating deportations of Jews.

Ghetto: The term ghetto has roots in 16th Century Venice, Italy when the walled, segregated Jewish Quarter of the city, called the Ghetto Nuovo (New Foundry) was established in 1516. "Ghetto" became the foundation for the term "ghetto." When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, approximately 3 million Jews lived in Poland, and they initiated a process of ghettoization in which Jews were moved from across Europe into ghettos where they were enclosed and segregated in deadly living conditions. The creation of ghettos was a key step in the process of brutally separating, persecuting, and destroying Jewish communities during the Holocaust.

Hate Crime: A crime of violence, property damage, or threat that is motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias based on the target's real or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

Holocaust: The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and mass murder of the Jewish people by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims. Six million Jews were murdered.

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

Interwar Period: The period of general peace between the conclusion of the First World War (1918) and the beginning of the Second World War (1939).

Nazi Party: National Socialist German Worker's Party (NSDAP). The party promoted strong nationalistic ideology with antisemitic rhetoric. Following the failed Nazi coup in 1923 the party had about 55,000 members. However, with

growing unemployment and poverty, Hitler manipulated people's plight for his own political gain.

Oral History: Stories or histories told by a person who experienced an event or time period firsthand.

Partisans: Members of organized groups fighting to sabotage the Nazis.

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

Primary Source: An artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or any other source of information that was created at the time. An original source of information about the topic.

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

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

"Resettlement": a Nazi euphemism for deportation and murder.

Righteous Among the Nations: Non-Jews who took great risks to save Jews during the Holocaust.

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

Star of David (Magen David or Jewish Star): A symbol of identification and pride often used by Zionists and some Jewish groups before the Holocaust, the Nazis utilized it to identify, separate, and dehumanize Jews, often requiring Jews in different countries to wear a yellow or blue Jewish star on their clothes when in public. The implication of this was to identify, humiliate, and shame Jewish communities and individuals.

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

Synagogue: In Judaism, a house of worship and learning.

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

LITERARY GUIDE TO *NUMBER THE STARS*

Number the Stars, written by Lois Lowry, is a fictional novel about the courageous Danish resistance and rescue of Danish Jews. The story takes place in the summer of 1943 – three years into the Nazi occupation of Copenhagen, Denmark, four years into World War II, and 10 years after the Nazis came to power. The novel follows 10-year-old Annemarie Johansen as she and her family attempt to save their Jewish friends and neighbors, the Rosens, transporting them across the border to non-occupied Sweden. Despite multiple run-ins with Nazi soldiers, the Johansens are able to smuggle the Rosens to safety by boat in the late hours of the night. In 1945, after WWII ends, Annemarie must deal with the harsh realities that the war brought to her and her family. This includes the truth of her sister's death. The novel ends on a hopeful note with the promise of the Rosens' return to Denmark.

Chapter Breakdown and Discussion Questions

Use the suggested questions as you see fit while teaching the book with your students. The questions can be shared as homework or class discussion.

Chapter I Discussion Questions

1. In April 1940, Germany invaded and occupied Denmark. What information can you gather about daily life under Nazi occupation from Annemarie, her family, and her friends? Why do you think Mrs. Johansen and Mrs. Rosen cannot afford to drink actual coffee or Kirsti cannot have cupcakes until after the war?
2. Annemarie describes the Resistance as an anonymous and courageous group of Danish fighters, “who were determined to bring harm to the Nazis however they could” (pg 8). In real life, the Danish Resistance was one of the most active and successful, creating a widespread movement throughout Denmark. The resistance, assisted by many ordinary Danes, organized the partly coordinated and partly spontaneous rescue of around 7,200 Danish Jews and 680 of their non-Jewish relatives during the Holocaust. Why do you think it was so important to keep this effort a secret? What do you think motivated people's choices in helping others? What does the word ‘resistance’ mean to you? Why do you think people resist?
3. When the girls are stopped by Nazis on their way home from school Annemarie, Ellen, and Kirsti have very different reactions. Why do you think that is? What are their reactions?

Chapter 2 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie insists the palace in her fairytale must be “a pretend place” and not Amalienborg, Denmark’s real palace. Why do you think that is? What is the importance of telling made up stories during difficult times? How can that help keep a positive attitude? Do you have any stories, movies, or books that make you or people you know feel better during hard times?

Chapter 3 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie struggles to understand why the Nazis would close a button shop. Shortly after the Nazis seized power in Germany in 1933, they began not allowing Jews to work certain jobs and closed their businesses. Why do you think that is? What does it mean to take away someone’s job? How does it change someone’s life to lose their job? How do you think that made Jews feel?
2. Peter brings Annemarie a seashell as a present. Where do you think Peter has been working? What do you think he might be doing there?
3. Annemarie tells her father that “all of Denmark must be the bodyguard for the Jews” (pg.25). Why do the Jews need help? Why do you think Annemarie says this? Do you think it would be hard to stand up for others in the presence of danger?

Chapter 4 Discussion Questions

1. Ellen invites Annemarie and Kirsti to join her family in celebrating Rosh Hashanah – the Jewish New Year. The Hebrew or Jewish calendar is a semi lunar calendar, which means it follow the lunar cycle. It is semi lunar, as it also takes seasons into account, making sure certain holidays are celebrated in certain seasons. Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah with symbolic foods such as honey – for a sweet new year. Why do you think Ellen shares her celebration with her friend? Do you have friends that celebrate different holidays than you do? Why do you think it is important to learn about other people’s traditions?
2. Ellen’s rabbi told his congregation that the Nazis had the names of Jews from all of the synagogues in Denmark. He also warned them that the Nazis were planning on arresting all the Danish Jews later that evening. Rabbis are religious leaders and teachers. Why do you think Ellen’s rabbi announced this news? What does it mean to be a community leader? Can you think of any leaders in your community? What do they do that makes you think of them as a community leader?

Chapter 5 Discussion Questions

1. Ellen wears a Star of David necklace. The Star of David is a generally recognized symbol of both Jewish identity and Judaism. Why would Ellen choose to wear this necklace? Is there a symbol you identify with that you wear? How does it make you feel? Do the things we wear reflect the way we see ourselves?
2. The Johansens must act as if Ellen were Lise Johansen in order to save her from the Nazis. After admitting she wishes to attend acting school, Ellen must now act as if she were Lise, Annemarie's sister, in order to survive. What does this situation say about war? What do you think might have happened to Ellen, and the Johansens, if her true identity was discovered?

Chapter 6 Discussion Questions

1. Mr. Johansen calls Annemarie's uncle, Henrik, to let him know he'll be sending Mrs. Johansen, the children, and "a carton of cigarettes" to visit him tomorrow. Annemarie realizes that the carton of cigarettes is code for Ellen. What does Mr. Johansen mean when he tells Henrik: "But there are a lot of cigarettes available in Copenhagen now, if you know where to look, and so there will be others coming to you as well, I'm sure." (pg.53). What do you think this quote really means? What might Annemarie and the others find in Gilleleje?
2. On the train, Mrs. Johansen, Ellen, Kirsti, and Annemarie have a run-in with Nazi soldiers. Why do you think Annemarie expected Kirsti to tell the Nazis that Ellen was Jewish? Why do you think Kirsti was not told about Ellen's true situation? What are the advantages and disadvantages of knowing the truth in a dangerous situation?

Chapter 7 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie and Ellen decide to explore Gilleleje on their own. Were there any suspenseful moments while the two were by themselves? Were they in any danger?
2. Mrs. Johansen warns Annemarie not to talk to anyone while she is in Gilleleje, even Uncle Henrik's friends. Why do you think Mrs. Johansen is worried about Annemarie talking to non-soldiers, especially neighbors and friends?

Chapter 8 Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Uncle Henrik really means when he says, “Tomorrow will be a day for fishing.” (pg.71)? Why do you think all the adults take “fishing” so seriously? Why do you think they speak in code around Annemarie and the other children? Do you agree with the choice to speak in code around kids?
2. Why do you think Mrs. Johansen and Uncle Henrik lied about Great-aunt Birte? What might a casket be holding, or hiding, if no one has actually died?

Chapter 9 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie questions the true meaning of bravery. What does bravery mean to you? Do you agree with Uncle Henrik that it’s easier to be brave when you do not know everything?
2. Why do you think Annemarie felt older after learning the truth about Great-aunt Birtie?
3. How does Annemarie protect Ellen in this chapter?
4. Who do you think the mourners really are?

Chapter 10 Discussion Questions

1. What caused the Nazis to investigate Uncle Henrik’s cabin? Why did Mrs. Johansen lie to the Nazis about what was in the casket? What do you think the Nazis were looking for?
2. Annemarie struggles to understand the psalm Peter reads from the bible. What do you think the psalm means? Why do you think the book is titled “Number the Stars”? What would you name this book?

Chapter 11 Discussion Questions

1. The Rosens are no longer able to live in Denmark because of the Nazis. They have to leave all their possessions and everything they loved in Denmark behind. How do you think that felt for them? What other places could be a “source of pride”?
2. Why do you think the young mother begged Peter not to give her daughter a few drops of the mysterious liquid? Why do you think Peter insisted?

Chapter 12 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie and Ellen say goodbye to each other as Ellen embarks for Sweden. Do you have a best friend? How would you feel if they had to leave suddenly, and you were not sure if you would see them again? What would you want to say to them?
2. Annemarie thinks her Papa must be having a harder time than her Mama, even though there is less danger in Copenhagen. Do you agree with Annemarie? Do you think it would be harder to help take Jews across the sea to Sweden or to go about normal activities, waiting for any kind of news?

Chapter 13 Discussion Questions

1. What do you think is in the package for Uncle Henrik? Why do you think they can't they leave for Sweden without the package?
2. Annemarie bravely offers to deliver the package, disguised as lunch, to Uncle Henrik. What kind of danger lies ahead for Annemarie? Why does her mother tell her to run as fast as she can?

Chapter 14 Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Annemarie tells herself a fairytale as she runs through the woods? Why do you think she chose the story of Little Red Riding Hood? How does Annemarie's journey through the woods compare and contrast to Little Red Riding Hood's?

Chapter 15 Discussion Questions

1. Annemarie has now had four run-ins with Nazi soldiers throughout the novel. How has she reacted each time? What do you notice about how the Nazi soldiers treat Annemarie? Do you think acting like "a silly little girl" helped Annemarie get passed the soldiers unharmed? How is being a kid better than being an adult?
2. The Nazis open the package to discover a handkerchief inside. What do you think is the real significance of that handkerchief?

Chapter 16 Discussion Questions

1. Uncle Henrik explains to Annemarie the importance of the handkerchief and how it helped throw off the Germans' dogs' scent. What do you think might have happened if the Nazis found the Rosens and other Jews on board Uncle Henrik's ship?
2. Annemarie mentions how horrible the traveling conditions must have been for the Rosens hiding beneath the floorboards of her uncle's boat. There was no light, bathrooms, food, or room to move around. The hidden passengers also had to be as quiet as a mouse in order to survive the trip. Describe what emotions you think the Rosens had. How do you think they felt?

Chapter 17 Discussion Questions

1. Were you surprised to learn that Lise was a part of the Resistance? What do you think it means to be an upstander and risk your life for a cause?
2. Why do you think Annemarie promises to wear Ellen's necklace until she returns to Denmark? What is the role or importance of the Star of David necklace in the novel?

Important Quotes from *Number the Stars*

Use this section along with the previous chapter questions or on its own as you see fit while teaching the book with your students. This section can be shared as homework or class discussion.

1. **“*Halte!*’ the soldier ordered in a stern voice. The German word was as familiar as it was frightening. Annemarie had heard it often enough before, but it had never been directed at her until now” (pg.2).**

Nazi Germany began occupying Denmark in 1940. The novel is set in late 1943, three years into occupation. How do you understand Annemarie's childhood? How might you feel if you were stopped on the street by a soldier simply for running? Would it be an unusual experience for soldiers to be patrolling the streets? How might you feel if you lived in a place where there was always a military presence?

2. **“‘I'm sorry I have dark hair,’ Ellen murmured. ‘It made them suspicious.’ Mama reached over quickly and took Ellen's hand. ‘You have beautiful hair, Ellen, just like your mama's,’ she said. ‘Don't ever be sorry for that...’” (pg.50).**

The Nazis idealized their false idea of a “pure race” - who they called Aryans - as blonde, blue-eyed, athletic and depicted Jews with brown hair and eyes and unathletic or weak. Nazi propaganda – widely spread ideas to intentionally harm a person or group – posters, books, and films showed people who fit their idea. However, the Nazis made this up even though they called it science. They themselves did not fit this ideal. For example, Adolf Hitler had brown hair. Are there other times in the book, similar to the quote above, when these stereotypes are present? When are they? What happens?

3. **“All of those things, those sources of pride – candlesticks, the books, the daydreams of theater – had been left behind in Copenhagen. They had nothing with them now; there was only the clothing of unknown people for warmth, the food from Henrik’s farm for survival, and the dark path ahead” (pg.94).**

What does this quote say about the Nazis treatment of Jews? What do you think happened to the Rosens’ and other Jews’ possessions that were left behind? How do you think it felt to be suddenly stripped of all your objects, clothes, and hobbies? How would you define pride?

4. **“That’s all that *brave* means – not thinking about the dangers. Just thinking about what you must do. Of course you were frightened. I was, too, today. But you kept your mind on what you had to do. So did I.” (pg.123).**

Uncle Henrik explains to Annemarie that being brave means being an upstander. An upstander is a person who recognizes when something is wrong and who acts or speaks up in support of others, despite being afraid. Can you think of a time you saw someone stand up for someone else? Why do you think people do it?

CREATING HISTORICAL NARRATIVES: ARTIFACT BASED INQUIRY WORKSHEETS

The following pages contain activities and discussion questions for your students based on primary sources and artifacts from the Holocaust Museum LA Archival Collection as well as other historical archives.

These worksheets contain images of artifacts, primary sources, and documents. Each primary source directly relates to and creates historical context for the book *Number the Stars*.

By utilizing different sources, historians, educators, and students can create historical narratives, providing a fuller understanding of this complex history. Holocaust history is multilayered and intricate; therefore, this case-study exercise will allow your students a better understanding of the larger history through creating a micro-history, focusing on a specific narrative and experience.

We recommend that you use these primary sources and suggested artifact-based inquiry questions in the following pages with your students in the classroom, encouraging them to think analytically about the sources presented and how they directly and indirectly relate to Annemarie's and Ellen's experiences as presented in *Number the Stars* and to the larger context of the Holocaust.

Map Exercise # 1

The World That Was: 2,000 Years of Jewish Life



This map depicts the length of time Jewish communities lived in countries. They were all subjected to antisemitic laws and violent actions by the Nazis and their collaborators simply because of their Jewish identity.

Identify the country in which *Number the Stars* takes place. What do you learn about this country from the map?

What does this map teach you about Jewish life? Why is it important to consider this in learning about the Holocaust?

Map Exercise # 2

The World That Was: Jewish Population by Country, 1933



This map depicts the number and percentage of Jews in countries throughout Europe the year Hitler came to power in Germany.

Identify the country in which *Number the Stars* takes place. What do you learn about this country from the map?

Compare this map to the previous map. How are they different? Do they work together to teach something bigger?

Map Exercise # 3

An estimate of Jews murdered in Europe during World War II



Identify the country in which *Number the Stars* takes place. What does this map tell you about the Denmark Jewish community?

Compare Denmark's statistics to other countries in Europe during World War II. What do you notice? Why do you think so few Jews were murdered in Denmark?

Voices From History

Rita Berwald from *Memories That Won't Go Away* by Michele M. Gold

“Two young men in their early twenties, dressed in Hitler’s uniform, with brown shirts and swastika armbands, complete with jackboots, were handing out leaflets. My heart was pounding as I heard the sharp command, ‘Halt!’ Knowing that I must not flinch, I looked straight into the uniformed man’s eyes.

‘You must salute,’ I responded. ‘I am Jewish.’ He stared at me and laughed and then by the grace of Gd I was ordered to go home. I ran home and was greeted at the door by my eldest brother with whom I shared the story, shaking and crying...

This was my first realization of what Hitler’s reign of terror really meant. It meant the end of my childhood. I was 13 years old.”



Rita Berwald's passport photographs.

Rita was a real German Jewish girl from Leipzig, Germany. She survived the Holocaust through a rescue of children known as the Kindertransport, but her parents sadly did not survive. Here, she recalls the first time she came face to face with Nazis and how it made her feel. Ellen and Annemarie are confronted by Nazi police in the street on their walk home from school. How is their experience similar to the above survivor's testimony? What do you think the girls were feeling and why? Why do you think this was a critical moment for Rita to remember or for Lois Lowry to include in her book?

Primary Source Activity 1



Sam Kalt and his sister Jetty in Germany before the Holocaust

Salomon (Sam) Kalt was born in Cologne, Germany on February 27, 1921. He lived with his mother Rosa, father Chaskel, and sister Jetty. Take a look at the photo of Sam as a kid. Describe it. How do they appear? What are they wearing? What does it tell you about Sam’s childhood. Sam’s sister did not survive the Holocaust. Do you think the meaning of the photo changed to Sam once he learned she didn’t survive?

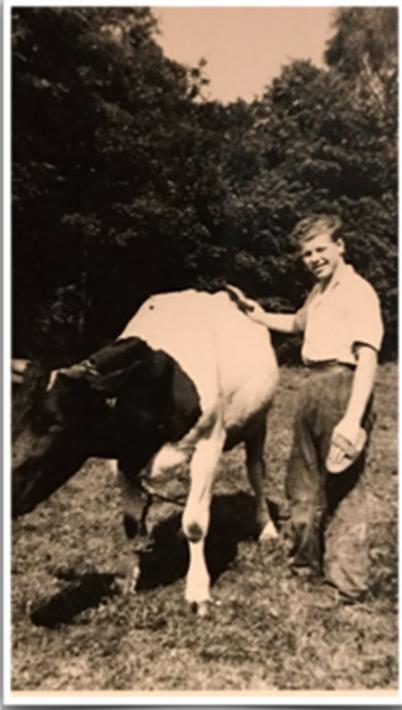
Creating Historical Narratives: Artifact-Based Inquiry Worksheet

When he was 17 years old, Sam returned home to find that the Nazis had arrested his parents and sister. Sensing the immediate danger and unsure what to do next, Sam left his house and was found by a member of the Jewish Youth Organization who told him that Germany was not safe and connected Sam with the network to secure false Aryan papers and passage to Denmark.

In addition to the false papers, Sam's fair complexion, blonde hair, and blue eyes helped him evade suspicion from German guards and officials during his escape. When he arrived in Denmark, members of the Jewish Youth Organization were waiting to place him in hiding on a farm owned by Andreas Anderson in Pejrup, Denmark, where he remained from 1938 until 1943. During his time in hiding, Sam received a letter from his mother and sister, who had been deported to the Warsaw Ghetto. This was the last he heard from them, as after the war, he learned that his family had all been murdered.

In 1943, German-occupied Denmark carried out one of the most famous and complete rescues during the Holocaust. On September 28, 1943, the Danish resistance was warned by a German official, George Ferdinand Duckwitz, of the imminent deportation of the Danish Jewish population. In the following days, the Danish resistance, with the help of Jewish community members, Danish authorities and police, and countless citizens, organized to transport 7,200 Jews and 680 non-Jewish family members in small fishing boats to safety in neutral Sweden. Alerted to this plan, Anderson instructed Sam to go to the dock in Copenhagen to board one of the departing boats to Sweden. Unfortunately, 470 of the Jews trying to escape were caught by the Germans and deported to Theresienstadt, a concentration camp.

Primary Source Activity 2



Photographs of Sam in hiding on Andreas Andersen's Farm, 1938-1943.

Compare Sam's experience to the stories in *Number the Stars*. What is similar or dissimilar?

Can you count how many people it took to save Ellen in *Number the Stars*? Can you count how many people it took to save Sam during the Holocaust? What does this tell you about rescue?

Primary Source Activity 3



This postcard was sent to Sam by his sister and mother who were arrested and sent to the Warsaw Ghetto. Describe the item. Are there any markings that tell you the time period it is from?

How do you think Sam felt to receive a postcard from his family while he was in hiding? Sam's family did not survive the Holocaust. Do you think this changed the meaning of this postcard for Sam? If so, how?

CREATING HISTORICAL NARRATIVES: *BEYOND THE SHADOWS* INQUIRY WORKSHEETS

In *Beyond the Shadows: The Holocaust and the Danish Exception*, Judy Glickman Lauder details the Danish Rescue and Resistance during World War II using powerful storytelling and photography. The stories highlight the brave men and women who risked their lives to help the Danish Jewish community escape from Nazi-occupied Denmark to neutral Sweden.

The Righteous Among the Nations, honored by Yad Vashem and the State of Israel, are non-Jews who took great risks to save Jews during the Holocaust for altruistic reasons.

Rescue took many forms and the Righteous came from different nations, religions, backgrounds, and professions. What they had in common was that they acted to protect Jewish people at a time when hostility and indifference prevailed.

While the title of Righteous is awarded to individuals, not groups, the Danish resistance viewed the Rescue of the Danish Jews as a collective act, and asked Yad Vashem not to recognize resistance members individually.

The rescue operation by the Danish underground is exceptional because of the widespread agreement and resolve of many Danes from all walks of life – intellectuals, priests, policemen, doctors, blue-collar workers – to save the Jews.

The following worksheets contain first-hand testimony from both Danish rescuers and Holocaust survivors. In addition, the worksheets feature photographs from the same piers and boats that were used to help hide Danish Jews from Nazi soldiers and transport them to Sweden.

By utilizing primary sources from *Beyond the Shadows*, students are able to reflect on the historical narratives present in *Number the Stars* and connect them to real life events. This inquiry-based learning model engages students in closely observing the artifact or oral history and actively analyzing it, helping students develop critical thinking skills.

Voices From History

Karl Egon Petersen, Gilleleje

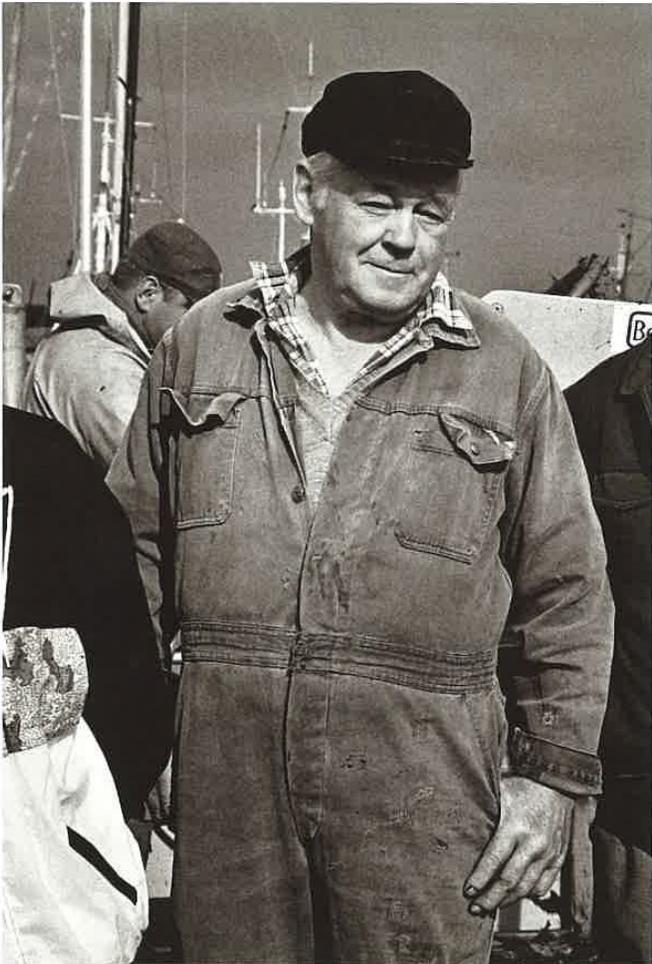


"I was walking in the street, and somebody came up and asked me if my name was Karl Egon Petersen. I didn't have to do anything, just tell them where I lived, then they would manage. And then thirty-six Jews moved into my small two-room apartment. I was so scared, I didn't dare go home. But at eight o'clock I went back and found the apartment empty. I thought the Germans had taken them. The same night I had arranged to help some people in Rågeleje, and I rowed over there. It was agreed that a light would be turned on in one of the windows. But there was no light. I rowed in anyway, and suddenly a flashlight was lit in my face-luckily by the people whom I was to help. There was room for six at a time in the boat, with heavy suitcases, and I rowed back and forth many times. I recognized some of them: they were the same people who had hidden in my apartment. On the last transport we left the hatch slightly open to give the people a little air. Then we were boarded by two [Danish] policemen for inspection. They quickly figured out what was going on and said, 'Why don't you open it up and give them a chance to breathe!'"

How does Karl explain his experience rescuing Danish Jews? Does anything surprise you?

Compare and contrast what Karl did in real life to what Uncle Henrik did in *Number the Stars*.

Voices From History
Frede Svendsen, Gilleleje



"In town there were rumors that a boat was leaving at ten in the evening. The boat was moored at the end of the pier, and at ten o'clock sharp people popped up from everywhere: scared, dark-clad. We helped them on board, and they threw money in bundles on the deck. Suddenly there was a cry: 'The Gestapo is coming!' Just as the boat pulled out, someone came running like wild. Johan and I took his arms and legs, swung him like a sack of potatoes, and threw him on board, where he landed safely on the deck. About 180 Jews sailed on that boat, but those who didn't make it were hidden in the church--and that was the night they were taken by the Germans. But the cry of 'Gestapo' had been false. It was a local policeman who was on guard and he had become so frightened by the sight of hundreds of people swarming around the harbor that he tried to stop it. After the war our 'sack of potatoes' came back--he was a [German] Jew--and he brought bicycle tires and chocolate as presents."

What strikes you about Frede's testimony? How is it like or unlike to what you read in *Number the Stars*?

Watch this [short clip of an interview](#) with Frede. How does the interview grow your understanding of his experience? Did you learn anything new about him, his personality, or his character?

The "sack of potatoes" or "Jew who arrived at the dock, from a farm" is actually Sam Kalt who you learned about! Fit this photo, testimony, interview, and story about Sam together. How does using many different sources change what you learn from only one? Did you learn anything new by having them together?

Voices From History
Svenn Erik Osterholm, Copenhagen



Svenn Erik Osterholm was instrumental in safeguarding religious texts of the main synagogue in Copenhagen. Under the eyes of the Germans, Osterholm and his friend David Israel broke into the synagogue early one evening and packed religious articles, including a large number of Torah scrolls, in wooden cases, which they then persuaded a forwarding agency to move to the Copenhagen harbor. The articles were camouflaged as personal belongings of a fictive Danish sailor being transferred to Sweden; falsified documents were provided by a civil servant in the ministry of trade. All of the articles arrived safely in Sweden and were distributed to their owners among the refugees.

We read and learned a lot about saving people, but Svenn also works to save important objects to the Jewish people. Why do you think he did this? What do you think it meant to the Jewish refugees to have these in Sweden? What does it mean to save a culture or tradition?

After reading *Number the Stars* and hearing some real-world examples from Denmark, what do you think makes a person want to help others? What qualities do you notice in either Annemarie and her family or Svann and Karl?

Voices From History

Rabbi Bent Melchior, A Miracle



In the autumn of 1943, I was a boy of fourteen. Until then, the Jews of Denmark had lived under occupation in the same conditions as the rest of the population, but as soon as the Danish government resigned, the Germans began to persecute the Jewish population. We were lucky that one of the Germans, a man called Georg Duckwitz, communicated to some Danish politicians that the Jews would be deported, three days ahead of the operation. They in turn warned the Jewish community. That was on a Tuesday, two days before the Jewish New Year.

I was the son of a rabbi. My father was not the official rabbi of the community, but since the chief rabbi had been arrested on the day the Danish government resigned, along with some of the leading figures of Danish society, the message from Georg Duckwitz was delivered to my father. I remember that Tuesday night just before curfew, a lady, a secretary of one of the Danish politicians, arrived at our home and gave us the bad news. It was not possible to do anything that evening during curfew. We couldn't use the phone, as we feared that all our calls were being listened to by the Germans.

The next morning many members of the community were present for a special service in the synagogue. My father stopped the service at a certain point and said, "We have no time now to continue prayers. We have news that this coming Friday night, the night between the first and second of October, the Gestapo will come and arrest all Danish Jews. They have a list of addresses and they will come to the home of every Jew and take us all to two big ships waiting in Copenhagen harbor, and on to camps on the continent. How do we pass this news on?"

He told everyone, "There are two things you should do. Number one, you should stay away from your homes on Friday night. What will happen after that we don't know, but on Friday night, in any case, don't be at home. Number two, pass this news on to as many friends, family, whomever you can, so that they also know to leave home by Friday."

Rabbi Bent Melchior's father, Dr. Marcus Melchoir, was able to warn most of the Danish Jewish community. The Germans were only able to find 200 out of around 8,000 Danish Jews. Why do you think the majority of Danish Jews were able to avoid arrest? Do you think everyone believed Dr. Marcus Melchior? What does it mean to be a community leader?

Compare and contrast how Ellen found out about the Nazis' plan to arrest all the Jews of Denmark. Do you notice any similarities? How do you think Ellen and Bent might have felt hearing that they might be arrested and deported on a special holiday?

Why do you think Georg Duckwitz, who was a Nazi soldier, warned the Danish Jewish community about the upcoming arrests and deportations? What do you think he risked by being an upstander? How might he have felt in that situation?

You can share the below photos with your students individually or in a group activity project, inviting them to learn together and share with the class through jigsaw learning.

Primary Source Activity 1



*This photograph from Judy Glickman Lauder's book, **Beyond the Shadows**, shows a pier in Denmark along the Danish Riviera.*

Take a close look at the photograph above. Describe what you see. Using your knowledge of Denmark's history and *Number the Stars*, what do you think might have happened on this beach during the Holocaust?

How does this photograph help inform your understanding of the Holocaust and the Danish Rescue? Does it give you a better picture of what Ellen and other Jewish refugees had to go through?

Primary Source Activity 2



*This photograph from Judy Glickman Lauder’s book, **Beyond the Shadows**, shows a boat docked at night in Denmark on a private pier.*

Take a close look at the photograph above. Describe what you see. Using your knowledge of Denmark’s history and *Number the Stars*, what do you think might have happened on this boat during the Holocaust?

How does this photograph help inform your understanding of the Holocaust and the Danish Rescue? Does it give you a better picture of what Ellen and other Jewish refugees had to go through?

Primary Source Activity 3



*This photograph from Judy Glickman Lauder's book, **Beyond the Shadows**, shows a boat hatch of a Danish fishing boat.*

Take a close look at the photograph above. Describe what you see. Using your knowledge of Denmark's history and *Number the Stars*, what do you think might have happened on this boat during the Holocaust?

How does this photograph help inform your understanding of the Holocaust and the Danish Rescue? Does it give you a better picture of what Ellen and other Jewish refugees had to go through?
