



At Great Risk:

Holocaust Rescue and
the Righteous Among
the Nations

Student Workbook



Student Name: _____
Survivor Author's Name: _____
Title of Memoir: _____

KWL Chart



At the end of the program, you will come back to complete the chart by filling in the last column (L). Your teacher will provide further instructions on how to complete this chart.

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WORKSHEET 2

Defining the Holocaust



By the end of this lesson, you will create a working definition of the Holocaust in your own words. Use a pencil so you can return to this worksheet and make changes and additions as you keep learning about the Holocaust.

Use the organizer below to take notes as you learn about the Holocaust.

Before 1933

1939-1945

1933-1939

After 1945

Other Information



Now that you have developed a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, try to write a definition. Refer back to your notes to help support your responses.

Using the space below, write your working definition of the Holocaust. It should include the following criteria:

- **Where it took place**
- **When it occurred**
- **Who was involved**

What were some of the ideas and developments that led to the Holocaust?

In your opinion, what makes the Holocaust a significant event in human history? Why is it important to study the Holocaust today?

WORKSHEET 3

Holocaust Rescue Short Film



Read these questions and think about them as you watch the short film [Holocaust Rescue and the Righteous Among the Nations](#).

What are three forms that rescue could take?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Define the Righteous Among the Nations. What are the three criteria for someone to be nominated for this honour?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why was it risky to rescue Jews during the Holocaust?

While there is no single underlying motivation among rescuers, what are some of the motivations that led people to rescue Jews during the Holocaust? Write some words or phrases that come to mind when you think about rescuer motivations.



BACKGROUND READING FOR EVA LANG

Eva Lang is a Holocaust survivor who immigrated to Canada in 1974 and now lives in Israel. You can learn about her experiences by reading her memoir, *“Three Stars in the Sky,”* in the anthology *At Great Risk: Memoirs of Rescue during the Holocaust*. Below is some background information that will help you understand Eva’s story.

BIOGRAPHY

Eva’s parents, Zacharia and Esther, moved from Poland to Belgium and settled in the large city of Brussels, where Eva was born in 1930. Eva grew up speaking French and Yiddish with her four siblings in a home where education and religion were highly valued. When the family fled to France to evade the German invasion, they were soon arrested by the French police and interned in refugee camps in southern France. The conditions at one of these camps, called Rivesaltes, were so terrible that Eva’s father contacted a welfare organization that was taking children out of the camps to care for them in healthier settings. Eva and her two younger sisters were freed from the camp and placed in children’s homes. After the Germans and their French collaborators began deporting Jews from France in 1942, people in the welfare organization called OSE (Œuvre de secours aux enfants, which translates to the Children’s Relief Agency) realized that the Jewish children were at risk and gave them false identities to prevent their capture. Eva spent the rest of the war living under a false name — Yvonne Drapier — and moving between different children’s homes. She and her sister Raymonde were reunited with their sister Renée in 1944, as France was being liberated. Their older brother, Michel, survived, but Eva’s parents and sister Sarah were deported and killed in Auschwitz-Birkenau. After the war, Eva moved to British Mandate Palestine and then lived in Canada for many years. Eva kept in touch with Yvonne Hagnauer and Henriette Chautard, two of the women who had worked in the children’s homes and protected her and her sisters during the Holocaust. They were honoured as Righteous Among the Nations in 1974 and 2001 respectively.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

When World War II began, Eva’s family lived in Belgium, a small country located in Western Europe between France and Germany. When Belgium was invaded by the German army in May 1940, Eva’s family fled to France. The German army then invaded France, where they occupied the northern part of France (the Occupied Zone) and put in place many anti-Jewish policies. The southern part of France (the Free Zone) was run by a new French government, called Vichy, that went along with German policies and orders, and even created its own anti-Jewish policies that were applied to the whole country. French police arrested Jewish refugees who had fled into the country and held them in internment camps, like Rivesaltes, where they suffered in poor conditions. Starting in the summer of 1942, Jews were deported to Nazi camps in Poland, where most were killed. The German army occupied the Free Zone in November 1942. As the risk of capture by the French police or the German occupiers increased, many Jews went into hiding by using false identification papers and pretending to be Christian. There were organizations that helped Jewish children, like Eva and her sisters, find safe places to live. France was liberated by the Allies in the summer and fall of 1944. Approximately 77,000 Jews in France were killed during the Holocaust, including Eva’s parents and her sister Sarah.



“The children’s homes were becoming targets of the Vichy authorities, so OSE decided to try a more radical way to hide French Jewish children. They would change their identities. They would make the children accept that — although it was totally incomprehensible — they would have to become someone else until the end of the war. We were little girls, but we were expected to become grown-ups. We had to play a double game, to completely adopt this new personality and to act normal in spite of everything.” (page 28)



BACKGROUND READING FOR DAVID KORN

David Korn is a Holocaust survivor who immigrated to Canada in 1965 and now lives in Halifax. You can learn about his experiences by reading his memoir, "Saved by Luck and Devotion," in the anthology *At Great Risk: Memoirs of Rescue during the Holocaust*. Below is some background information that will help you understand David's story.

BIOGRAPHY

David Korn was born in 1937 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. He lived with his older brother, Jacob, his mother, Miriam, and his father, Abraham. In 1939, Jews in Brno were pressured by the Germans to leave, so David's family moved to be near relatives in Slovakia. In 1942, David's parents, desperate to spare their family from being deported to Nazi camps, sought shelter in nearby towns and villages. Through contacts in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, David and Jacob received false identity papers and were placed in an orphanage run by Pastor Vladimir Kuna. For the rest of the war, the brothers lived in the orphanage with other children, including other hidden Jews, and were well cared for through illness, threats to their safety and the disruptions of war. In the summer of 1945, David's aunt Libusa found her nephews at the orphanage and brought them to live with their uncle Martin. In 1948, they left Czechoslovakia and went first to Paris, and then to Israel in 1949, where David went to school, joined the army and studied to become an engineer. David immigrated to Canada in 1965 and now lives in Halifax. In the 1990s, David reconnected with Pastor Kuna, who had been recognized in 1972 as Righteous Among the Nations for his role in saving Jewish children at the orphanage.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Central European country of Czechoslovakia was bordered by Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Now this region is made up of two countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Created after World War I, Czechoslovakia was home to several ethnic groups, including Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Jews and others. In 1938, Germany expanded its borders by annexing a part of Czechoslovakia that had a large German minority. The following year, Germany annexed the remainder of the Czech lands, while Slovakia broke off to become an independent state. The Slovak government allied itself to Germany and imposed anti-Jewish measures. Jews in Slovakia were at risk of being used for forced labour, being deported to Nazi camps (including Auschwitz-Birkenau) and being killed by Slovak collaborators. In 1944, the Slovak resistance attempted to fight back against Germany, which then invaded Slovakia and fought both the resistance and the invading Soviet army until liberation in spring 1945. More than 60,000 Slovak Jews were killed in the Holocaust, including David's parents.



"There were seventy children in the orphanage, twenty-six of whom were Jewish. It was superhuman how Pastor Kuna and his staff risked their lives to save ours. If they had been found out, they would have been executed. Nobility should not be hereditary — an individual, based on their deeds, should merit it. Nobility deserves to be bestowed upon Pastor Kuna, Sister Maria and the staff of the orphanage for saving twenty-six lives." (page 124)



BACKGROUND READING FOR FISHEL PHILIP GOLDIG

Fishel Philip Goldig is a Holocaust survivor who immigrated to Montreal in 1948, where he lives now. You can learn about his experiences by reading his memoir, "The Survival Story of a Six-Year-Old Boy," in the anthology *At Great Risk: Memoirs of Rescue during the Holocaust*. Below is some background information that will help you understand Fishel's story.

BIOGRAPHY

Fishel was born in the small town of Mielnica, Poland (now Melnytsia-Podilska, Ukraine), in 1933 and lived with his parents, Baruch and Rachel, in a loving home where Jewish education was emphasized. Mielnica was in eastern Poland, near the border with Ukraine, and many Ukrainians lived there. Fishel's life was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II, when the Soviet army occupied the town and forced his family to move. Then, with the German attack on the Soviet Union, this part of Poland faced another more deadly occupation, this time by the Germans, who put in place increasingly restrictive anti-Jewish measures. Soon Fishel's family was forced into a ghetto in the town of Borszczów (now Borshchiv), where they lived in inhumane conditions. In 1943, they narrowly escaped the destruction of the ghetto and fled into the woods. Through some local contacts, they found a hiding place on the farm of a Ukrainian family named Kravchuk. Fishel, his parents and three relatives lived there, in a tiny cave, wholly dependent on the farmer for their survival. They stayed there until the spring of 1944 as the Germans were retreating from the area. After the war, Fishel's hometown became part of Soviet Ukraine, and the family faced continued threats from the Soviet regime. They escaped from the country and spent time in a displaced persons camp in Germany before arriving in Canada in 1948. Many years later, Fishel got in touch with the descendants of his rescuers, who were honoured as Righteous Among the Nations in 2009.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Poland is a country in Central Europe, located between Germany and the Soviet Union, that had a large Jewish population before World War II. Jews faced antisemitism and discrimination in Poland, but many also participated in Polish culture and society. World War II began with the German invasion of Poland in September 1939 and the occupation of western Poland. Soon afterwards, Germany's then ally, the Soviet Union, occupied the eastern part of Poland. The town of Mielnica was part of the Soviet-occupied zone until the summer of 1941, when the German army attacked the Soviet Union and occupied eastern Poland. The German occupiers began persecuting Jews and forcing them into ghettos. Ghettos were small, crowded areas with poor living conditions that were guarded by Germans. In 1942, the Germans started deporting Polish Jews to Nazi camps and killing centres in Poland. Jews in Poland who managed to escape ghettos and deportation needed help, but people who helped Jews did so at a great risk because they would likely be killed if the Germans or their collaborators found out. The Soviets liberated Poland between 1944 and 1945. Approximately three million Polish Jews were killed in the Holocaust, including many of Fishel's relatives.



"Once a day, early in the morning, Kravchuk would bring us some food and remove the waste. He would also bring us a big pitcher of water to wash with and for drinking. Once in a while he would spend some time talking to us. He was a nice, gentle man, though he and his wife were afraid of hiding us — they were often afraid to even come into our hole because they were worried neighbours would see them. There was always the fear of betrayal." (page 174)

WORKSHEET 4

Survivor Memoir Notes



Title of Memoir:

Survivor Author's Name :

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Place of birth	Location(s) during the war	Location at the end of the war	Locations after the war and to the present
.....
.....
.....
Birth year	Parents' names	Siblings' names, if applicable	Other notable relationships (relatives, friends, neighbours, etc)
.....
.....
.....

SURVIVOR-RESCUER RELATIONSHIP

Name of the rescuer(s) *check the Background Reading sheet for the name of your survivor author's rescuer(s)
At what point did the rescuer(s) and survivor author meet?
How did the rescuer(s) connect with the family of the survivor author?
What were some specific actions taken by the rescuer(s) to protect/care for the survivor author?
What risks did the rescuer(s) take by helping Jews? What challenges did they face?

<p>If they were separated from family, how did the survivor author reconnect with their surviving family members?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>How and when did the survivor author reconnect with the rescuer(s) after the war?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>After reading this memoir, why do you think the survivor author nominated their rescuer(s) for Righteous Among the Nations?</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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NOTES

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