

Phoenix Holocaust Association
In Partnership with
Arizona Jewish Historical Society
Present a Video for High School Students

RESILIENCE:
Reflections of Arizona Holocaust Survivors

TEACHER GUIDE



Oskar Knoblauch



Dr. Alexander White



Esther Basch

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BACKGROUND

Dear Educators:

The Phoenix Holocaust Association (PHA) was founded by Holocaust survivors in 1985 and remains true to its mission to honor the memory and legacy of the survivors and victims. This 40 MINUTE video features three Arizona survivors so students can learn from their stories, even when the survivors are no longer with us. Arizona Jewish Historical Society partners with PHA on educational programs focused on the Holocaust and other genocides and was instrumental in developing this video.

In 2020 a taskforce was formed, bringing together educators, professors, survivors, and other community members to create a toolkit for educators to support them in responsible, high quality Holocaust education. The resulting resource can be used by schools to comply with HB 2241, passed in 2021, which mandates that students in Arizona learn about the Holocaust and other genocides at least twice in Grades 7-12. The entire toolkit can be found at <https://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/holocaust-and-genocide>.

This Teacher Guide offers some suggested lessons and resources for educators to use before, during, and after sharing the video with students. We hope you find these resources helpful in teaching this sensitive topic and hope you will reach out to PHA's Speakers' Bureau if you would like to have a survivor or a descendant of a survivor speak in your classroom, either in-person or via Zoom. Please note that there is material in the video showing the horrors of the Holocaust, so please preview the video to determine its appropriateness for your classroom. Click on the link below to view video:

The Phoenix Holocaust Association

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/604928243>

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO VIEWING THE VIDEO

USHMM Guidelines to Teaching About the Holocaust <https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust>

USHMM Timeline Activity <https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Timeline-Activity-Instructions.pdf>

USHMM Lesson on history of antisemitism <https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20200327-lesson-plan-history-antisemitism-holocaust.pdf>

Echoes & Reflections Defining the Holocaust Lesson/Activity "What is the Holocaust and Why is it Important for us to Study It?" <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-1-studying-the-holocaust/#content>

Video:

Echoes & Reflections lesson on Pre-War Jewish Life <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-1-studying-the-holocaust/#content> (scroll down to lesson)

Map:

Choose a map to show students the different areas these three survivors are from as well as where the camps and ghettos were located mentioned in this video.

PRE-WAR LIFE:

- Before Hitler came to power in Germany, how do you believe Jewish people lived? How do you think they were treated? How do you think they were treated in other countries, like Poland or France?
 - A KWL chart can be used for this section. (What do I know about pre-war Jewish life? What do I wonder? What did I learn?)
- What was life like before Hitler for Oskar Knoblauch? Write one quote that stands out in this section from Mr. Knoblauch.
- What was life like for Dr. Alex White? Write one quote that stands out in this section from Dr. White.
- What was life like for Esther Basch? Write one quote that stands out in this section from Mrs. Basch.
- What do you notice in common among the stories you just heard? What does this tell you about Jewish life in Europe before Hitler came to power?

An additional resource to teach about pre-war Jewish life can be found at echoesandreflections.org. Click on "Teach," then on "Lesson Plans," and then on the first unit, called "Studying the Holocaust." Once on the page for the unit, scroll down to the last lesson, "Pre-War Jewish Life."

THE WAR:

- Since the survivors interviewed here were teenagers at this time, how did they witness the impending war? How did it affect them?
- What is common in their memories, and what is different?
 - Ask students to jot down notes on each survivor.

Specific Questions to consider for each testimony in this section:

Esther Basch:

- Discuss the violence Esther and her family faced. What made them decide to give in?

Oskar Knoblauch:

- Oskar mentions not being able to participate in his sports club. How devastating would this be?
- What do you know about the Hitler Youth? Consider Oskar's feelings as a teenager, as his friend joins a group he cannot belong to.
 - Connect the restrictions Oskar mentions (such as the boycotts, the role of the police, rations, armbands, the treatment of Jewish World War I veterans in Nazi Germany, etc.) to what students have learned about the Holocaust, pointing to the USHMM timeline (if you used it) or any other resources about the history.
 - If you would like to share more about Jewish students and sports, show the clips of Margaret Lambert in Echoes & Reflections. One is in the unit "Antisemitism" and the other is in the unit "Nazi Germany." They are each short, but she discusses her love of sports and what it feels like when she can no longer participate in Germany.
 - For more information on the Hitler Youth (Hitler Jugend), see <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/hitler-youth-2>.

Alex White:

- Dr. White discusses hearing from survivors of two mass shootings that took place in his area. Depending on the age of your students, you might discuss that these mass shootings were the first phase of the Final Solution, which claimed at least 2 million Jewish victims. If students would like to learn more, Father Patrick Desbois has written two books about the topic: *The Holocaust by Bullets* and *In Broad Daylight*. You might also look at the site he maintains with Yahad

in Unum at <https://www.yahadinunum.org/en>. [This should be used with teacher discretion, and not with younger audiences]. If students have read Elie Wiesel's *Night*, they might also connect Dr. White's testimony to Moishe the Beadle in Wiesel's book.

- Discuss the job Alex's father had and how that saved him and his sons but could not save the women in the family.

GHETTOS:

If you have time, utilize the unit on ghettos on Echoes & Reflections at <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-04-the-ghettos/#content>. At the very least, give students an overview of the concept, with ghettos in many European countries, typically in an undesirable area of town, and often sealed off from the rest of the community. Also point out that not all survivors experienced ghettos.

- Ask students to make a list about the conditions in the ghettos in this video, especially from Oskar Knoblach's testimony.
- How many calories did they receive per day?
- What Other restrictions did they face?
- What kind of job did Oskar have, and how did one Polish boy take risks to help Oskar? What makes a person decide to become an upstander and help someone else?
 - Be clear to students that we cannot say what we would do in a similar situation, as we were not there.

CAMPS:

- A map would be helpful to show where the camps mentioned in this video were located.

Dr. Alex White:

- What kind of camp was Plaszow? Discuss the jobs Alex had to do here.
- Why was he forced to dig up mass graves?
- Discuss Oskar Schindler (see online exhibition at <https://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/special-focus/oskar-schindler>).

Esther Basch:

- Discuss the role of Dr. Josef Mengele, as Esther describes him, and how she escaped the gas chambers.

A good way to portray Esther's experience is to show students the Auschwitz Album, which depicts every step of the arrival of Hungarian victims to Auschwitz in photographs taken by a camp photographer (link to album at https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/album_auschwitz/index.asp).

Esther also describes a second camp, Fallersleben (see article at <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-neuengamme.de/en/history/satellite-camps/satellite-camps/fallersleben-arbeitsdorf/>).

If more information is wanted on death marches, see the article at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/contnt/en/article/death-marches-1>.

LIBERATION

- Dr. White: liberated by the Soviets. What implications did this have?
 - He was liberated from Schindler's factory; if you have time, you could also discuss what happened to Oskar Schindler upon liberation.
- Esther Basch: Americans liberated her from Salzwedel. How did she get her nickname, and why did she get so sick? Esther mentions being sent to a Displaced Persons (DP) camp.
 - If you have time, Echoes & Reflections has a lesson on the DP camps. That can be found by going to <https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-8/?state=open#content> and scrolling down to the third lesson, "Displaced Persons' Camps After the Holocaust."
- Discuss the choices many survivors had to make when they couldn't return to their home country, such as Mrs. Basch and her husband going to Palestine. What difficulties did they face in getting there?
- Oskar Knoblauch: What help did Oskar's family have after liberation? How long did it take to find their mother?
 - Remind students that it often took many years for family members to find each other.

You might want to discuss why different areas were liberated by different nations and at different times (again, a map would be helpful). If you have time and want to explore individual liberators and their testimonies, go to the Echoes & Reflections unit called "Survivors and Liberators"

(<https://echoesandreflections.org/unit-8/?state=open#content>) and scroll down to the second lesson.

RELOCATION/COMING TO NORTH AMERICA

- In this section, the survivors have varied experiences after the war. Discuss some of the difficulties they faced. Discuss how they moved to different countries. All three led happy, successful lives.
- Why do you think it is important to the survivors that we know this information? What does this tell us about their characters?

MOTIVATIONS FOR TELLING THEIR EXPERIENCES

For each survivor, ask students to note their motivation for speaking and their message to students. Discuss why these messages are important to each of them, and what we can learn from them. Ask students to write a reflective paragraph, discussing either one message that stood out to them the most and why, or discussing what they learned from this video and the survivors.

Keywords:	
American Zone	The area of Germany after WWII that the United States occupied and took over to restore order. After WWII, Germany was divided into four zones administered by the US, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and France.
Auschwitz	Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest concentration camp and extermination center where over 1.1 million people were killed. Prisoners arrived at Birkenau, where they were selected either to work or to be murdered.
Barbed wire	The fences at Auschwitz had barbed wire, but also were electrified. Some prisoners chose to take their lives rather than suffer the atrocities of the camp. If one chose to take their life, many were typically punished with death, since prisoners were not allowed to make such a choice.
Barrack	The dwellings where prisoners lived in at the camps; very crude structures, typically with bunks that held many more people than they were meant to hold.
Beards	It is a custom for some Jewish men to keep a beard; some don't shave at all.
Cyprus	An island nation in the Mediterranean Sea.
Fallersleben	Camp where Esther Basch was imprisoned for 9 months before being taken on a death march.
Gestapo	The German state secret police during the Nazi regime, known for their cruelty and brutality.
Ghetto	An enclosed area where the Jews were forced to live, often in squalid conditions.
Glazier	A person whose profession is fitting glass into windows and doors.
Haifa	Port city in Palestine where many Jews landed in their escape from Europe during the Holocaust. Today it is in Israel.
Hitler Youth	The Hitler Youth was the youth organization of the Nazi Party in Germany. It began as a type of club but later became mandatory for able-bodied Aryan children (boys and girls) to join.
Josef Mengele	Known as the Angel of Death, or the doctor of death, Mengele led many of the selections at Birkenau and was in charge of many cruel medical experiments.
Kapo	A prisoner (sometimes Jewish) who was chosen to be in charge of other prisoners in his or her barrack. The kapo received extra food rations and other incentives to treat their fellow prisoners cruelly.
Krakow Plaszow	The city of Krakow held a ghetto, as well as a camp, Plaszow, which is featured in the film Schindler's List.
Liquidation	A term used by the Nazis to describe the emptying of ghettos, sending victims to the death camps.

Mensch	A Yiddish term meaning a person of integrity and honor.
Monocle	A circular lens worn to correct vision.
Palestine	Where many Jews fled during and after the Holocaust, considered their homeland.
Rabbi	A Jewish religious or spiritual leader and teacher
Ravine	A deep gorge with steep sides; these were often dug for mass shootings during the Holocaust, especially in Eastern Europe.
Resettlement	A euphemism used by the Nazis to move the Jews from their homes into the ghettos; the term was also used when Jews were later taken to the death camps under the guise of moving elsewhere to work.
Salzwedel	Camp where Esther Basch was when she was liberated by American troops.
Saxon	Early Germanic people.
Schindler, Oskar	A German businessman and member of the Nazi party who began to sympathize with the Jews and kept them working in a factory in Krakow thereby saving 1,200 Jewish people; a film, Schindler's List, was made many years later about his life by Steven Spielberg.
SS	The SS (<i>Schutzstaffel</i> , or Protection Squads) was originally established as Adolf Hitler's personal bodyguard unit. It later became both the elite guard of the Nazi Reich and Hitler's executive force prepared to carry out all security-related duties, without regard for legal restraint.
Star of David	A six-pointed star that is a symbol of the Jewish faith. It was later used during the Holocaust to mark or label people as Jews; the Star of David was sewn on clothing or worn on armbands and were often yellow in color.
Storm Trooper	A member of the Sturmabteilung, or SA, also known as the Brown Shirts; they were known for their aggression and violence.
Synagogue	A house of worship for the Jewish faith.
Treblinka	A death camp outside of Warsaw, Poland, where an estimated 925,000 Jews, Poles, Roma, and Soviet prisoners of war were murdered.
Upstander	The opposite of a bystander; someone who stands up for others when they see intolerance and injustice.
Visa	A document needed to enter some countries or to stay for a specified time period.