

Self-Expression

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What passion, talent, or interest do I have that helps me define who I am (my identity)?
- How can my passions, talents and interests help my and others through difficult times?
- What makes me strong and resilient?

Overview

Geared toward younger learners, this activity engages students with a sharing activity about the teacher's and students' favorite hobbies or interests, and a discussion of how hobbies and interests are an important part of every person's identity. The class will then reflect on *Hold On to Your Music* by recounting times when Lisa Jura relied on her passion for playing the piano to get through very difficult times as a refugee on the Kindertransport prior to World War II. Students will create personal identity charts that will encourage them to reflect on how their own personal and social identities can empower them through adversity. The activity concludes with students polling other classes about hobbies and interests students in the school use to help them during difficult times.

Target Audience

Grades K-2

Activity Duration

Two-three 45-60 minute class periods

Enduring Understandings

- Self-awareness skills include the ability to identify one's own personal, cultural, and linguistic assets; as well as the ability to develop one's own interests and a sense of individual agency.
- Individuals can overcome adversity by relying on or learning new forms of artistic expression, physical activity, or hobbies.
- Social awareness skills help build understanding of individuals, their emotions, experiences, and perspectives through a cross-cultural lens.

Materials

- Copy of *Hold On to Your Music*
- Interview Guides—Student Interests (one per student)
- “How Music Helped Lisa” handout (one per student)
- Instructions—Creating an Identity Chart (display)
- Kindertransport routes and historical timeline (display)
- Identity Charts (one per student)

- Refugee’s stories, such as children involved in the Kindertransport, can help students connect to important skills and themes of self-awareness such as resilience, persistence, courage, and hope.

Historical Background for Educator Kindertransport and Refugees

Kindertransport, a German term meaning children’s transport, was the informal name of a series of rescue efforts that brought thousands of refugee Jewish Children to Great Britain from Nazi-held lands between 1938 and 1940. After Kristallnacht, an organized massacre of German Jews, the British government eased immigration restrictions to allow children under the age of 17 to enter Great Britain from Germany and German-annexed territories (Austria and Czechoslovakia). Private citizens or organizations had to guarantee payment for each child’s care, education, and eventual emigration from Britain. In return, the British government agreed to allow unaccompanied refugee children to enter the country on temporary travel visas. It was understood that parents or guardians could not accompany the children, but once the war ended, the children would return to their families.

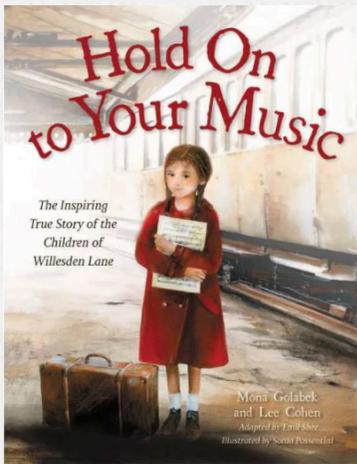
The last transport from Germany left on September 1, 1939, just as World War II began. The last transport from the Netherlands left for Britain on May 14, 1940, the same day that the Dutch army surrendered to German forces. In all, the rescue operation brought about 9,000–10,000 children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to Great Britain. Some 7,500 of these children were Jewish. Many children from the Kindertransport program became citizens of Great Britain, or emigrated to Israel, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Most of them would never again see their parents, who had been murdered during the Holocaust.

Similar to the experience of Jews living in Nazi-controlled areas before World War II, refugees today have no choice but to flee their homes when they are threatened by conflict and persecution. They often encounter immense challenges and adversity in their journeys, including exposure to extreme weather conditions, lack of access to proper food, shelter, education, and job opportunities.

Because they are forced to confront difficult circumstances and trauma, studying the stories of refugees and genocide survivors can offer students valuable case studies on skills and character

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traits they can develop for overcoming adversity in their own lives. For example, Lisa Jura's dedication to musical performance gave her a sense of purpose and helped her maintain the resilience needed to overcome adversity as a Holocaust survivor and refugee.

Sources

- <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/german-jewish-refugees-1933-1939>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/teaching-about-refugees.html>
- https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf
- <https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10>

Social-Emotional Learning

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning is the leading organization advancing the promotion of integrated academic, social, and emotional learning for children in Pre-K through Grade 12. This organization has developed the following five interrelated core competencies for effective social and emotional learning:

- **Self-Awareness** concentrates on understanding your emotions and thoughts and how they influence your behavior. Skills include self-perception, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.
- **Self-Management** emphasizes your ability to regulate your emotions and behaviors in different situations, as well as how to set and work toward goals. Skills include impulse control, executive function, stress-management, and self-discipline.
- **Responsible Decision-Making** highlights your ability to make positive choices and take responsibility for positive and negative outcomes. Skills include identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving problems, and reflection.
- **Social Awareness** focuses on your ability to empathize with others. Skills include empathy, appreciating differences, and respect.
- **Relationship Skills** revolve around your ability to relate well to others. Skills include communicating clearly, listening, cooperation, resisting negative pressure, resolving conflicts, and supporting one another.



These competencies, viewed through the lens of human rights education, can play an important part in engaging students in understanding how their social, emotional, and academic learning connect with the social and historical contexts in their communities and larger society. This lens of SEL, sometimes labeled “transformative” SEL, positions students as co-creators in their own learning and encourages students to use their constructed knowledge to address issues of equity, power, injustice, and privilege.

Procedure

Ask

- 1** To begin class, display a photograph of your favorite pastime outside of teaching, such as playing a sport, engaging in artistic expression, gardening, collecting an item, etc. Take a moment to describe for students how you became involved in this pastime and why it is such an important part of your personal identify and life. You might share a time when engaging in the activity provided comfort, or an experience when you realized how enjoyable it was, or an experience when you realized that you had talent for the activity. Then ask “What is one of your passions? Why is this activity becoming an important part of who you are?”
- 2** After distributing/displaying the interview guide to support the conversation, invite students to share responses with their neighbors in a think-pair-share. Encourage students to listen carefully to their partner and you may even choose to model how the exercise works for the class. In full class discussion, a selection of students will share information about their *partners’* favorite activities. Ensure that students answer both prompt questions that started the discussion. Students may find that they have hobbies in common with others in the class or they might identify another student to learn something interesting about them.
- 3** Next, share with the class that today they will read a story about a young girl who used her passion and talent to help her through an extremely difficult time. Prior to reading the story, help students build context for understanding by showing students where the setting for the story takes place as well as the Kindertransport routes. It will also be helpful to share a brief historical background and setting for the class by using the Kindertransport Timeline handout and by reading the Historical Background from *Hold On to Your Music*, The inspiring True Story of the Children of Willesden Lane before the read aloud.

Analyze

- 4 Next, display the questions “When in the story did Lisa rely on her passion to get through difficult times?” and “How did playing the piano help Lisa at specific difficult moments in her life?” Share with students that as they listen to the story, they will be collecting details that provide information for answering these questions. Before beginning the read aloud with students, check to be sure that each student has a “How Music Helped Lisa” handout to capture supporting details from the story. Remind students that in the left column they will be writing a time or event where Lisa used music and in the right column, they will be explaining how Lisa used music to get her through a difficult time.
- 5 As the read aloud is taking place, be sure to pause at places within the story that students might want to include as evidence in answering the guiding questions. You may choose to further support student understanding and connection to Lisa’s story by having students notice the different settings in the story as well as the facial expressions of the characters.
- 6 When the read aloud is finished, allow students a few moments to look back over what they have written. Invite the class to share examples of parts of the story when Lisa used music to get through a challenging time and describe how this happened. As students share their responses, record their answers on the board for the rest of class to see and ask students to compare their examples as they discuss. If students need clarification or struggle to find examples, be sure to revisit parts of the story and allow students time to work collaboratively as a class to support each other’s answers.
- 7 To close out the exercise, explain to students that throughout the story the class has documented how Lisa demonstrated “resilience.” Help define the word for students and highlight that being resilient is the theme of the story and that music supported Lisa during very difficult times. Ask students to take a moment to draw an image of what they think it means to be resilient or consider a time when they demonstrated resilience.
- 8 Next, students will complete a quick written exercise as they respond to the questions, “Why did Lisa’s mother tell her to hold on to her music?” and “What activity do you ‘hold on to’ during difficult times and why?” Students may choose to respond to the prompt with words or pictures that help answer the question. For the second question, display the following sentence stem for students to help answer the question:
 - *I hold on to _____ during a challenging time because it _____.*
- 9 You may choose to share with students that many of their interests and hobbies help make up a part of their identity and that these things may change in the future or be opportunities to continue to improve or learn more.

Apply

- 10 To help students make connections to the important themes of the story, explain that the class will watch a short video testimony of Margaret Lambert, another Jewish survivor who lived in Nazi-controlled territory and faced Anti-Semitism before World War II. Be sure to pose the following question to students before they watch: “How did Margaret Lambert use her interests to help her through difficult times?” Share with students that this video clip is a testimony, or someone’s first-hand experience. It will be important for students to not only listen carefully, but to also consider how she speaks, her body language, and the emotion that she shows.
- 11 After students have watched the short testimony, allow students to share a few reactions, and allow time for questions that they may have about the speaker or her experience.
- 12 Now that students have read the story and heard a first-hand account from the Kindertransport, students will reflect on how the themes from the story are present in their own lives. To do this, introduce students to the identity chart activity. An identity chart is a helpful tool that helps promote self-awareness by inviting students to list and categorize words that describe the many parts of their identity. The teacher will distribute “Identity Chart” instructions and blank Identity Charts to each student. To help model how to use the charts, work as a whole class to complete an identity chart for Lisa Jura. During the exercise, students can practice using the guiding questions to call out important parts of Lisa’s identity before considering their own.
- 13 Next, have students work independently to create their own identity charts by using the categorized guiding questions to list as many words as they can that answer the question, “Who Am I?”.
- 14 As an exit-ticket or quick write, students can respond by drawing pictures or writing for the prompt, “Based on your identity chart, which of your identities do you rely on during difficult times? How?” Remind students that they can simply write down words they used, draw images, or even circle or highlight portions of their identity chart.

Act

- 15 To act on their learning and strengthen connections to the concept, students can work with their teacher to poll other classes to see what hobbies/interests help them get through a hard time or difficult situation. The survey results can also be shared in a class, school newsletter, or displayed in a creative way around the school to help reinforce conversations around identity and self-awareness. Students can also extend the activity by completing the identity chart with their families to help share thoughts and model self-awareness and self-management.

Connections

Connect to Student Lives	Connection to Contemporary Events	Connection to the Future
Students will identify aspects of their identities that help them during difficult times.	Students will connect personal interests for overcoming adversity displayed by Jewish refugees in the World War II era to traits they can develop today.	Students will recognize the importance of skills and identity traits for overcoming adversity they might face in the future.

Clips of Testimony

- **Margaret Lambert**, Jewish survivor, speaks about her childhood in Germany and discusses her family life in the prewar period. She also discusses what Jewish identity meant for her and her family.

National Standards

College, Career and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards

D2.Civ.7.3-5 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school settings.

D4.2.3-5 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

RI.5.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.5.2 Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

W.5.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CASEL's SEL Framework

SELF-AWARENESS: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose. Such as:

- Integrating person and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets

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- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

SELF-MANAGEMENT: The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation & agency to accomplish personal/collective goals. Such as:

- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Showing courage to take the initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

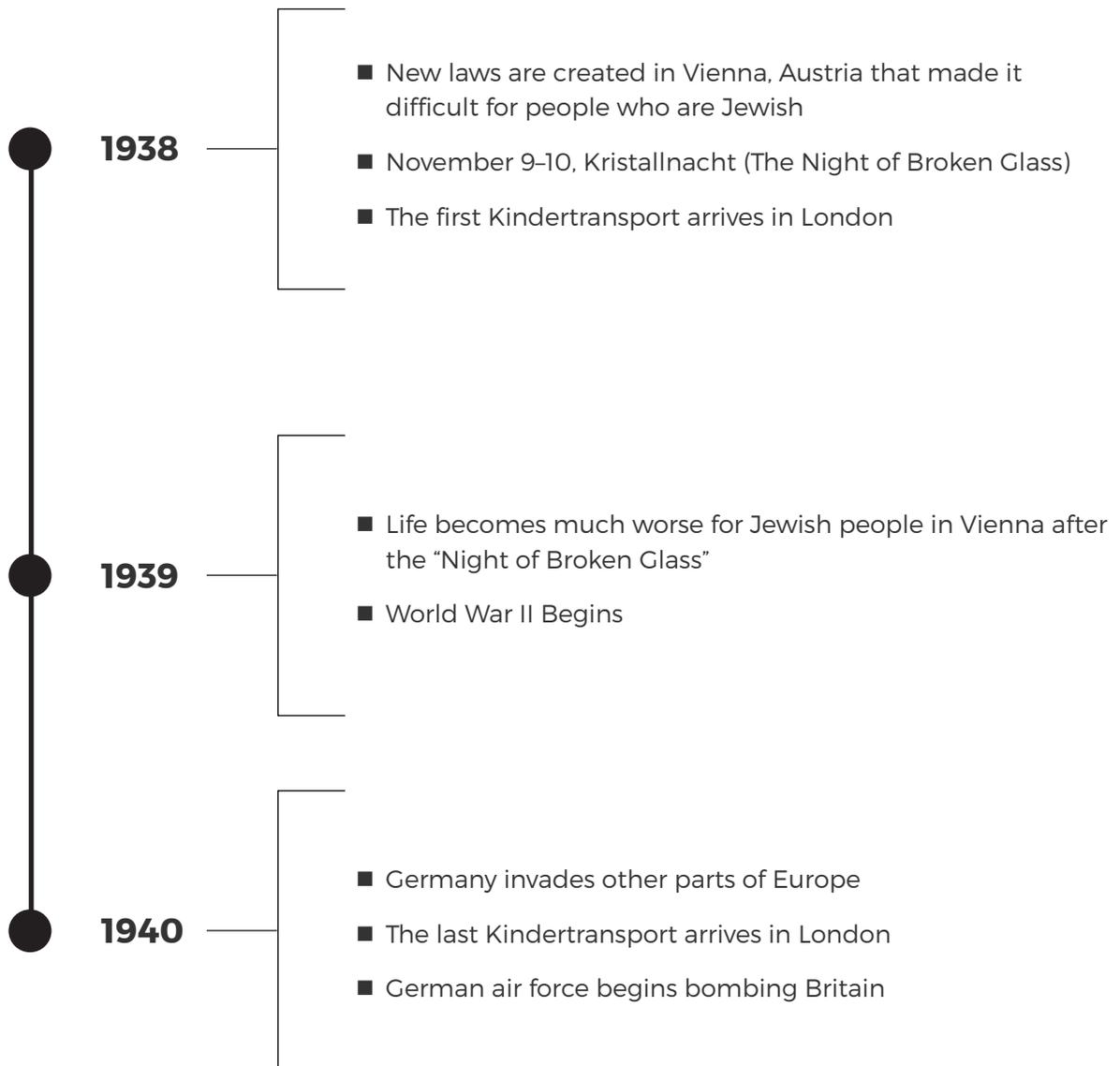
The Willesden Project is a global initiative that expands the reach of Lisa Jura's story of survival, resilience, and triumph as she struggles to come of age separated from her family during World War II, as originally shared by her daughter, author and concert pianist Mona Golabek, in *The Children of Willesden Lane* books and musical performances. [Learn more at The Willesden Project.](#)

Hold on to Your Music

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Kindertransport Timeline and Historical Background



How Music Helped Lisa (Educator Example)



Times When Music Helped Lisa	How did “holding on” to music help during this difficult time?
Lisa’s music teacher tells her he can no longer teach her	Lisa and her mother practice together and she reminds Lisa that music will get her through hard times.
At the train station leaving her family	Lisa’s mother tells her to “hold on to your music” as she departs to Britain on the train without her family.
Playing the piano as bombs fell around her	Lisa plays songs that remind her of home as she adjusts to life at Willesden Lane and as bombs fall on the city around her.
Getting accepted into the Royal Academy of Music	Lisa finds inspiration and purpose by practicing to gain admittance to the Royal Academy of Music.
Performing at the concert hall	Lisa performs at her first concert and reflects on her promise to her mother of “holding on to her music.”

Resilience: *The ability to recover quickly from difficulties*

How Music Helped Lisa



STUDENT HANDOUT

Times When Music Helped Lisa	How did "holding on" to music help during this difficult time?

Resilience:



Directions: In the organizer on the next page, write as many words as you can that describe who you are. You can use the guide questions to help.

Identity Chart Guide Questions

- What *places* describe who you are? Be sure to include your community, city, county, state, country, and any other places that describe who you are.
- What *family relationships* describe who you are? You can include relationships with parents, siblings, grandparents, and extended family.
- What *friendships* describe who you are?
- What *hobbies, interests, or passions* describe who you are? It's OK to include more than one.
- What *cultural traits* describe who you are? Think about any language, religion, or group characteristics that are important to you.
- What *other* words describe who you are?

Who is _____ ?



STUDENT HANDOUT

<p>Place Identity What places are important to you?</p>	<p>Family Identity What is important to your family?</p>	<p>Friendships Do you have friendships that are important to you? Why?</p>
<p>Hobbies, Interests, Passions What things are important to you?</p>	<p>Cultural Identity What are some things you and your culture?</p>	<p>Other Identities What other things help explain more about you?</p>

Survivor Biography for Educator Background



STUDENT HANDOUT

Margaret Lambert was born on April 12, 1914, in Laupheim, Germany. She had two brothers, Rudolph and Walter. Margaret first attended Jewish-School, then a public high school followed by a preparatory school. Margaret's love and mastery of sports, which included skiing, skating, running, and climbing, led to her acceptance to a physical education program at a German university in 1933. However, due to the rapidly changing political climate and anti-Jewish sentiment, Margaret postponed her studies. Margaret then studied in London where she won a British track and field championship in 1934. Following her success and threats to her family, Margaret returned home to compete for Germany in the 1936 Olympics. The only Jewish member of the team, she was selected for her athleticism and so that other countries would not boycott the Olympics. However, she was dropped from the team as other teams began to arrive. In 1937 Margaret was able to immigrate to the United States and would go on to marry Bruno Lambert and have two sons. In 1980, Margaret was inducted into the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.