

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

HMLC/2018

### IN THE MUSEUM: LIFE BEFORE THE WAR AGAINST THE JEWS

**Listen to the recorded guides** describing Jewish life before the war. Write a brief description of what each person says. What do their accounts suggest about the variety of situations they found themselves in?

- Nelly Komras, Vilna
- Harry Berger, Vienna
- Renata Vamberg, Stuttgart
- Hilda Lebedun, rural Czechoslovakia

**Look carefully at the photos** that line the entrance to the museum. These are St Louis families that experienced the cruelties of the Third Reich.

✦ Describe the family activities they chose to photograph. In what ways do their daily lives look familiar?

✦ What you can observe about their economic and social status? What objects, clothing, or settings suggest this?

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Want to know more?

- *The Hare With the Amber Eyes*. Edmund De Waal. Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2010. The lives of a cultured and wealthy family through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- *There Once Was a World. The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok*. Yaffa Eliach. Little Brown, 1998. The lives of Jews in the small villages of eastern Europe.
- *Tevye the Dairyman and the Railroad Stories*. Sholem Aleichem. Schocken, 1996. Read the stories that inspired *Fiddler on the Roof*.
- *Schnitzler's Century. The Making of Middle Class Culture 1815-1914*. Peter Gay. W.W. Norton, 2002. Vienna and the position of assimilated Jews.
- *Into the Arms of Strangers. Stories of the Kindertransport*. Mark Jonathan Harris. Bloomsbury, 2001.
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✦ List the ways that people in these photographs managed to survive the Nazi intention to rid the Germany of Jews:

BONUS QUESTION: In another gallery in the museum, find Felix Levy. How did he survive?

✦ The Berger family is represented in a number of photographs. If you read carefully, you can trace their individual experiences. What happened to them?

- Elias Berger:
- Theresia Berger:
- Harry Berger, Theresia's son:
- Edith Berger, Theresia's daughter:
- Steffi Berger, a cousin:

What do these different paths tell us about the choices and opportunities faced by those who eventually survived?

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Want to know more?

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**IN THE MUSEUM: LIFE BEFORE THE WAR AGAINST THE JEWS**

**Listen to the recorded guides** describing Jewish life before the war. Write a brief portrayal of what each person says. What do their accounts suggest about the range of situations?

- Nelly Komras, Vilna
- Harry Berger, Vienna
- Renata Vamberg, Stuttgart
- Hilda Lebedun, rural Czechoslovakia

**Look carefully at the photos** that line the entrance to the museum. These are St Louis families that experienced the cruelties of the Third Reich.

✦ Describe the family activities they chose to photograph. In what ways do their normal, daily lives look familiar?

Family groups on a picnic or at other leisure activities; well-dressed people in formal portraits; people in military uniforms; photos include their pets; they are well-fed and seem to be at ease. They appear secularized: no tsitzit, yarmulkes or other obviously observant dress.

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✪ What you can observe about their economic and social status? What objects, clothing, or settings suggest this?

The formal portraits and good clothes, the inclusion of a nanny suggest upper middle, upper class, or professional status

✪ List the ways that people in these photographs managed to survive the Nazi intention to rid the Germany of Jews:

- Lived in hiding in the Reich
- Escaped to live in Russia
- Escaped to live in hiding in France and Italy
- Survived work/concentration camps
- Able to emigrate to Cuba
- Included in the *Kindertransport*
- Emigrated to Shanghai

BONUS QUESTION: In another gallery in the museum, find Felix Levy. How did he survive?

- Rescued by boat from Denmark to Sweden

✪ The Berger family is represented in a number of photographs. If you read carefully, you can trace their individual experiences. What happened to them?

- Elias Berger: Died in Auschwitz
- Theresia Berger: Escaped to Italy & France
- Harry Berger, Theresia's son: Escaped to Italy & France; joined the Resistance
- Edith Berger, Theresia's daughter: Emigrated to Cuba
- Steffi Berger, a cousin: Kindertransport

What do these different paths tell us about the choices and opportunities faced by those who eventually survived?

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