



The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation

34 East 67 St. 2nd floor - New York, NY 10021

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EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

"ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BASIC VALUES OF A DEMOCRACY"

This 90 minute two part educational program has been developed by our Foundation to be a resource for teachers. It focuses on the Social Studies standard; "Civics, Citizenship and Government," particularly aiming to teach the principles, ideals and core values of the American democratic system. Using the life of Raoul Wallenberg, and other similar "heroes," it will help children understand human dignity, liberty, justice and equality.

Why Use the Life of Raoul Wallenberg?

Mr. Wallenberg was a 32 year old member of a prominent Protestant Swedish family. Yet, he volunteered to go to Nazi-occupied Budapest, Hungary in 1944, at the request of the United States, to save the lives of as many Jews in Hungary as possible. At a risk to his own life, he established "Swedish Houses" where people could live and get some protection from the Swedish government which was neutral in the war. Mr. Wallenberg housed, fed and protected thousands of Jews. He created a set of "Swedish Passports" that fooled the Nazis and saved many from deportation to the extermination camps.

At the risk to his own life, he even went directly to cattle cars filled with people and to actual "death marches" to fight with Nazi Officers to rescue people. Other countries began to copy his ideas, saving thousands of people. His life will help the students understand how people should live their lives together and how citizens can support the proper use of authority to combat the abuse of political power. Raoul Wallenberg and thousands of others risked their lives to save Jews and other people who were not only being treated unfairly by the Nazi regime during World War II, but were the victims of genocide.

Content of the Presentation

The 90 minute presentation has two parts: (1) The slides presentation will use the concept of "Super Hero," to discuss the students' idea of what a hero is. It will describe the deeds of Raoul Wallenberg within the context of World War II and the Holocaust. It will ask students to think of other people who were heroes in



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the same way: e.g., Martin Luther King, Susan B. Anthony, Andrew Goodman, James Earl Chaney and Michael Schwerner, Harriet Tubman, Hiram Bingham, Carl Lutz (other saviors of World War II) and others; (2) Actual testimonies from people saved by Raoul Wallenberg will be read and discussed. In addition, the program includes a reference list for teachers who want to go further into this issue.

Learned Concepts of the Program

- A democracy values the principles, ideals and core values of human dignity, liberty, justice and equality.
- Raoul Wallenberg was a hero because he believed in these values and acted upon them by risking his life to uphold them.
- There are other people today and throughout history that are heroes in the same way.
- Governments can affect the lives of its citizens.
- Nazi Germany's and the Hungarian authorities values affected the human and civil rights of its citizens.
- Genocide is the systemic killing of all people from a national, ethnic or religious group or the attempt to do so.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary will focus on the **Key Term for Grades 5 through 7:**

- Justice
- Political systems
- Authority
- Citizenship
- Civic values
- Civil rights
- Democracy
- Individual rights to life
- Respect for minority rights
- Power
- Ethnic group
- Genocide
- Adolf Hitler



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- Human rights
- Holocaust
- Jews
- Nazi Germany
- Religion
- Values
- Terrorism
- World War II

In addition, there will be others such as: anti-Semitism, prejudice and diplomatic, and other vocabulary terms related to the presentation.

Motivation:

Students will be introduced to Raoul Wallenberg's deeds through his comparison with the equivalent of contemporary fictional Super Heroes in children's literature and movies. Once the students establish the characteristics expected from a Super Hero, they would describe and evaluate everyday heroic figures such as firefighters and others. During the lesson, they will learn that super powers are not always necessary for the accomplishment of heroic deeds; that it is possible to become a hero by performing human acts.



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THE PROGRAM

Part One – 45 minutes - Slides Presentation

The program is composed of a interactive Slides presentation that introduces the concept of hero, Raoul Wallenberg's story and the context of his deeds to the students. The presentation begins with the students' concept of a hero as someone with super powers. It then leads to a discussion of ordinary people who do "heroic" things. It puts Raoul Wallenberg's heroic deeds into a geographic and historical context. Questions and Answers are encouraged during the presentation.

Suggested Questions

- What is your idea of a Super hero? Let's list some super heroes that you know.
- What are the characteristics of a Hero?
- Do you think that anybody can be a Hero? Why or Why not?
- What were the values of Nazi Germany and how did they affect the human and civil rights of their citizens?
- Why did the US ask Sweden to help the Jews in Hungary?
- Why was Sweden willing to help?
- Why do you think Raoul Wallenberg volunteered to go to Hungary?
- What do you think of Wallenberg's idea to create passports of protection?
- Can you think of other ideas to save lives?
- Why do you think so many people are trying to find out what happened to Wallenberg?
- What are the values of a democracy?
- What makes Raoul Wallenberg a hero?
- Can someone be a hero in other ways than save people's lives?
- Do you know of other people who are or were heroes in the same way?
- Have you ever done anything heroic?
- Do you think you could do something that respects the values of our democracy?



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Part Two – 45 minutes – Small Group Discussion

The class will be divided into 4 or 5 groups (depending on class size) to read and discuss testimony written by an actual survivor saved by Raoul Wallenberg. A list of suggested questions to guide the discussion is included. In addition each student within a group could be assigned the task of taking notes and being ready to summarize the discussion for the whole class.

After the group discussions, each group will share the answers to the questions and their reactions to the assigned testimony with the rest of the class. They then could share their own personal every day heroic experiences or other heroes they have known or read about.

Suggested questions

- Do you think heroes like Wallenberg exist today? Do you know someone you can call a hero? What makes this person a Hero?
- Many other representatives of governments saved lives even though their governments forbade them to. Would you disobey orders from your bosses or those in authority if they seemed wrong to you?

TESTIMONIALS

The following testimonials were written by real people saved by Wallenberg.

Testimony of George Boros: Saving My Mother

After the war whenever two or more survivors of the Holocaust got together, they asked, "What is your story?" "How did you survive?" Everybody had his own "miracle" which was more exciting than any action movie. I myself was captured 11 times by the Hungarian Nazis and went from one hiding place to another until I was liberated by a Russian soldier.

This is the story of how my mother was saved. It was November 27, 1944 in Budapest Hungary. It was my parents' wedding anniversary and I was 14 years old. My parents and I were living in a special house set up by Raoul Wallenberg to protect us from the Nazis when suddenly we were herded together by the



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Nazis and sent to the unused Budapest Brick Factory. All of our valuables were taken – my parents' wedding rings. At the Brick Factory, my mother and my father were selected to go on a "death march" towards Germany where they would be killed if they survived the march. I was selected to go to the Budapest Ghetto where all Jews in Budapest had to live, which meant that I might live.

We were desperate. I noticed a man arguing with the Hungarian Nazis and guards. This was Raoul Wallenberg. He told the guards that all women over the age of 40 must be allowed to go to the Ghetto rather than be forced to go on the death march. My mother was only 39 and looked about 25. I ran to Wallenberg and begged him for help. The guards asked for my mother's papers, but Wallenberg interrupted and said, "I know this lady. She was a guest in our house in Sweden and she is over 40." My mother was saved and was sent to the Ghetto.

It was because of Raoul Wallenberg that my mother survived. My father, a very courageous man, escaped from the death march after walking a few miles with them. Later, my mother, father and I went to Canada and lived there for the rest of our lives. When I got married I had a son and we named him Raoul.

Suggested Questions

- 1) What was life like for young George and his family?
- 2) Were they living in a democracy? How can you tell?
- 3) How did the Nazi rule affect George and his family?
- 4) How did Raoul Wallenberg save George's mother?
- 5) What do you think would have happened to Wallenberg if he was caught in his lie?
- 6) Why do you think Wallenberg did what he did to save George's mother?
- 7) Why do you think he could not do the same for George's father?
- 8) Was what Raoul did to save George's mother an act of heroism?
- 9) Would George and his family been a victim of genocide if Raoul Wallenberg had not helped?
- 10) Why were they targeted for genocide?
- 11) Do you know any other people who are or were heroes in the same way as Wallenberg?



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Testimony of Andrew Fuchs

This is a sad little story of a sad little child, who lost his parents in inhuman conditions. I was 8 years old in 1944. I was born and lived in Hungary. I remember only a few mental images of that terrible period. After all, I was only 8 years old.

I lived with my parents and my sister. My parents were merchants – they sold things. Like all Jews at this time, we were forced by the authorities to always wear the yellow star sewn onto our clothes so that everybody would know that we were Jews. All Jews were treated unfairly just because they were Jews. The authorities took all radios from every Jewish home. These actions and others were meant to isolate and later murder all of the Jews.

Up until this time, we lived in a town outside of Budapest. Then the Hungarian Nazis, made us leave our town. We were sent to housing that was only for Jews in Budapest. Later, we suddenly had to leave even these houses.

I can still remember that awful time. We were forced to march with our hands up in the air. Large crowds of hateful people watched and sneered. One person even spat at me – an 8 year old! We were herded like animals into a synagogue. I believe we were to be sent to a concentration camp.

That is when I saw Raoul Wallenberg. He rescued my family and other people, by convincing the Nazis to let him take my family and others back to our designated houses.

Later, a law was passed which said that all Jews between the ages of 16 to 50 or 60 must be sent to concentration camps. My parents were hauled away. I never saw them again. I was all alone.

Raoul Wallenberg came to save me and the other children who had been left behind and alone. Raoul risked his own life to save all of the children. He took us to different places to hide. We had to keep moving every 2 days afraid we would be found. Some non-Jewish Hungarians helped to hide us. All of these people were also risking their own lives. I was terrified.

Raoul told the authorities that we were protected under the Swedish government. Raoul tried to leave us with a group of older Jews but the Hungarian Nazis found us. Even though we were “protected,” the Nazis did many cruel things to me and the other children. They pretended that they were



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going to execute us by lining us up in front of a wall and then left us standing. We were terrorized. Once, they poured cold water over me because I fell asleep while standing at the wall. I saw many elderly men murdered. When Raoul found out about what was happening, he started to move us around again from place to place. Finally, he took us to a building that was supposed to be safe but it wasn't safe either. The Hungarian Nazis found us and continued harassing and terrorizing us. I saw a group of teenagers, who were caught trying to escape, executed. Fortunately, some of us did manage to leave this horrible place. The Soviet Army finally liberated us.

Raoul Wallenberg was a truly righteous person. Without his help, I would not be alive today.

Suggested Questions

- 1) What was life like for young Andrew and his family?
- 2) Were they living in a democracy? How can you tell? What things does Andrew speak about that indicates that this was not a democracy?
- 3) How did the Nazi rule affect Andrew and his family?
- 4) How did Raoul Wallenberg save Andrew and his family?
- 5) Do you think Wallenberg risked his life?
- 6) Why do you think Wallenberg did what he did?
- 7) Why do you think he could not save Andrew's parents in the end?
- 8) Was what Raoul did an act of heroism?
- 9) Would Andrew been a victim of genocide if Raoul Wallenberg had not helped?
- 10) Why were Andrew and his family targeted for genocide?
- 11) Do you know any other people who are or were heroes in the same way as Wallenberg?

Testimony of Marianne Vaney

I was born in Hungary. In 1933, at the age of 7 we moved to Budapest. We were very poor. By 1938, there were many political changes. The first law against the Jews was passed. Adolf Hitler promised to get back territories Hungary lost in World War I if Hungary agreed to eliminate Jews from all economic life and public life. Soon other laws passed. Restrictions against Jewish and Christian marriages were put into place.



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In 1942 at the age of 19, I received my teaching certificate, but since I was not allowed to teach at a state school because I was Jewish, I took a part-time job in an adult education college. I did not make much money.

Things went on that way until the morning of March 19, 1944. I was woken up by a phone call from a neighbor. He said, "The Germans have entered Hungary. Don't leave the house." Later in the afternoon he came to tell us not to go near any of the railway stations because German soldiers were arresting Jews. The Germans had help from the Hungarian authorities.

Things quickly changed for the worse. It was decided that all Jews had to be moved to a Ghetto where they would live together in "Jewish Houses". No Jews could be out during the hours of 6 PM in the evening to 7 AM in the morning. All Jews had to wear a yellow star sewn into their clothes and wear it at all times so they could be identified. Jews were not permitted to be lawyers or doctors and Jews were not allowed to work in Christian firms. They had to give up their cars.

Because I needed a job, I agreed to work with the Jewish Council to count the number of Jews and select the houses they would live in the Ghetto. I was ashamed of this work. So, I decided to leave. I told them I had health problems.

At this time I lived in one of the Jewish Houses with my parents. I found out that there was a man named Raoul Wallenberg who was trying to save Jews. I went to his office to ask for a job. I was hired as a typist. Wallenberg created "passports" to protect people who were being sent to concentration camps. As a typist, it was my job to type names on these documents that would protect people from being sent to concentration camps. I often worked late into the night.

In addition to creating these documents, Wallenberg actually put his life in danger by going to the Austro-Hungarian border several times to save people before they would be lost forever. He went there to bring people back. Once or twice I had to go to the railway station to receive the people that Wallenberg saved to help them get to the protective houses that Wallenberg had set up. Their state of health was unimaginable. They suffered from dysentery, exhaustion and shock. I had never seen anything like it before.

Wallenberg was never afraid to risk his own life. There were several plots to kill him. He remained fearless and continued to do his job. He worked to save Jewish lives not matter how dangerous his job was. He also argued with the



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German troops and stopped them from blowing up the Jewish Ghetto and killing the remaining Jews.

My parents and I survived because Wallenberg protected us. I am alive today to tell my story.

Suggested Questions

- 1) What was life like for Marianne and her family?
- 2) Were they living in a democracy? How can you tell?
- 3) How did the Hungarian government affect Marianne's life before the occupation of the Germans?
- 4) How did German occupation change things?
- 5) Why do you think were Marianne and others willing to risk their lives working for Wallenberg?
- 6) Do you think that you would want to work with someone like Raoul? Why or why not?
- 7) How did Raoul Wallenberg save people?
- 8) Why do you think Wallenberg risked his life to save others?
- 9) Is Raoul a hero? Why do you think so?
- 10) Was Marianne a hero? Why or why not?
- 11) Would Marianne and her family been victims of genocide if Raoul Wallenberg had not helped?
- 12) Why were they targeted for genocide?
- 13) Do you know any other people who are or were heroes in the same way as Wallenberg?

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Possible Follow up Activities Related to Raoul Wallenberg

- Students can write an essay on Wallenberg's story focusing on his commitment to the values of a democracy.
- Students can write a fictionalized testimony as if Raoul Wallenberg had saved them.



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- Each student or group of students can create a comic book with Wallenberg or others as the Hero.
- Students in an art class can do a portrait of Wallenberg or others using different techniques such as painting, drawing and collage.
- Students can write a poem or the lyrics of a song dedicated to Raoul Wallenberg.
- The school can organize a contest in order to select the best portrait, essay or song written in honor to Wallenberg.
- The school can put together a display of Wallenberg's portraits, essays and songs produced by the students.
- Screening of the documentary film "Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive", followed by the testimony of people who worked with or were saved by Raoul Wallenberg.
- Visit to the Museum of the Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.
- The School can organize a play based on Wallenberg story to be performed at the end of the year.
- Student Action

Students can help gather signatures for a world wide campaign started by the Wallenberg Foundation. The campaign is aimed at getting signatures on a petition to definitively discover Raoul Wallenberg's final destiny. It hopes to gather 100,000 names for the 100,000 lives Wallenberg saved in Budapest. The collected signatures will be presented before the UN. See <http://www.raoulwallenberg.net/?en/news/2018.htm>.

Possible Activities Related to Current, Past or Recent World Events:

- Students can do some research on other heroes
 - Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar (Burma);



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- Wangari Maathai (Kenya – winner of 2004 Nobel Peace Prize);
 - Shirin Ebadi (Iran –winner of 2003 Nobel Peace Prize
 - Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - Susan B. Anthony
 - Andrew Goodman, James Earl Chaney and Michael Schwerner (three civil rights workers killed in Mississippi in 1964)
 - Harriet Tubman
 - Others saviors of the Holocaust such as Angelo Roncalli, Sousa Mendes and Carl Lutz
 - Paul Rusesabagina (Real life hero of “Hotel Rwanda” the movie); and
 - Christopher Reeve
- Students can conduct research on current or recent genocides: Rwanda, Darfur and Cambodia.
 - Students can conduct research on the genocide trial of Saddam Hussein.

RESOURCES

The Wallenberg Foundation offers the following help:

- An individual can be sent to present the program if you wish
- Portraits of Wallenberg
- Examples of songs dedicated to Wallenberg
- A individual who has survived the Holocaust can speak to students of his/her experience

Films

- **“Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive”**. Dir. David Harel. Documentary. 1983.
- **“Raoul Wallenberg: Between the Lines”**. Dir. Karin Altmann. Documentary. 1991.
- **“Wallenberg: A Hero's Story”**. Dir. Lamont Johnson. Telefilm. 1985.
- **“Shoa”**. Dir. Claude Lanzmann. Documentary, 1984.
- **“Schindler’s List”**. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Feature film based on a real story. 1994.
- **“Into the Arms of Strangers”**. Dir. Mark Jonathan Harris. Documentary. 2000.



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Websites

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- Jewish Virtual Library, www.us-israel.org
- American Jewish Committee, www.ajc.org
- Museum of the Jewish Heritage, www.mjhnyc.org
- Historica, www.histori.ca
- The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, www.jfr.org
- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, www.udhr.org/history/default.htm
- New York City Department of Education, Social Studies Curriculum, <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/TeachLearn/OfficeCurriculumProfessionalDevelopment/DepartmentofSocialStudies/Links/sscurric.htm>

Books

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- Gersten, Alan. **A Conspiracy of Indifference: The Raoul Wallenberg Story**. Pennsylvania: Xlibris Corporation, June 2001.
- Korey, William. **The Raoul Wallenberg Mystery: fifty-five years later**. New York: American Jewish Committee Publications, 2000.
- Levai, Jenő. **Raoul Wallenberg: His Remarkable Life, Heroic Battles and the Secret of His Mysterious Disappearance**. Melbourne: WhiteAnt Occasional Publishing, 1988.
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Books for Children

- Streissguth, Thomas **Raoul Wallenberg: Swedish Diplomat and Humanitarian (Holocaust Biographies)**. Rosen Publishing Group: New York. 2001.
- Nicholson, Michael; Winner, David; Sherwood, Rhoda (Editor). **Raoul Wallenberg. (People Who Have Helped the World)** Morehouse Publishing: Pennsylvania. 1990
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For an extended list of bibliography. please visit
<http://www.raoulwallenberg.net/?en/wallenberg/944.htm>