



**The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation**

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

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[www.raoulwallenberg.net](http://www.raoulwallenberg.net)

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

### “ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BASIC VALUES OF A DEMOCRACY”

## MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS

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## TESTIMONIALS

The following testimonials were written by real people saved by Wallenberg. Here is a list of suggested questions your students might think about for all of the testimonies<sup>1</sup>.

1. What was life like for the person writing the testimony?
2. Was he or she living in a democracy? How can you tell?
3. How did the Nazi rule affect her/him and the family?
4. Why do you think Wallenberg did what he did to save these people?
5. Was this an act of heroism?
6. Would these individuals been a victim of genocide if Raoul Wallenberg had not helped?
7. Why were they targeted for genocide?
8. Why didn't the Jews leave Hungary when they realized things were bad?
9. How did people survive in the ghetto when they had to give up their professions and livelihoods?
10. Why didn't they fight back?
11. Have we ever seen treatment like this in the United States?
12. Why do you think people would treat others this way?
13. Why did these people share their family's story with us?
14. Who was the hero in this story? Why?
15. Do people choose to be heroes?
16. Why would someone put themselves out when they won't get something in return?
17. Why do people react differently to the same situation?
18. Do you know any other people who are or were heroes in the same way as Wallenberg?
19. Would you risk your life to save other people?
20. What would you do to save yourself or your family?
21. Have you ever done something you were ashamed of? What did you do to change this?

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the general and specific questions were recommended by teachers participating in a workshop.



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### 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 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.

#### Specific Suggested Questions for George Boros Testimony

1. Was it alright for Wallenberg to lie to the guards? Why?
2. What do you think would have happened to Wallenberg if he was caught in his lie?
3. What is the difference between a ghetto and the "death march"?
4. Why were these people rounded up and put in the Brick Factory?



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5. Why were the guards willing to listen to Wallenberg?
6. Why do you think Wallenberg could not help George's father?
7. How do you think the father was able to escape?
8. Why did this family end up in Canada?



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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.

Specific Suggested Questions for Andrew Fuchs Testimony

1. How do children feel when they are separated from their parents? How might you feel?
2. How can you relate this story to an 8 year old boy enslaved in the United States?
3. Why do you think the radios were removed from all the homes?
4. What if all of your electronic media were removed from your home?
5. Why do you think individuals between the ages of 16-50 were chosen to go to concentration camps?
6. Describe how you would feel if your parents were taken from you when you were 8.
7. Why do you think Wallenberg could not save Andrew's parents in the end?



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### 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.

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



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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 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.

Specific Suggested Questions for Marianne Vaney Testimony

1. Were the people who held jobs in the government betrayers or survivors?
2. How did the Hungarian government affect Marianne's life before the occupation of the Germans?
3. How did German occupation change things?
4. Why do you think were Marianne and others willing to risk their lives working for Wallenberg?
5. Do you think that you would want to work with someone like Raoul? Why or why not?
6. Was Marianne a hero? Why or why not?





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## VOCABULARY DEFINITIONS

**Adolf Hitler:** Austrian-born founder of the German Nazi Party and chancellor of the Third Reich, who ruled as an absolute dictator. (1933-1945). His evil regime was known for the extermination of millions of people, especially European Jews.

**Authority:** The power to carry out laws, command, determine, or judge; one that has power, especially a government or body of government officials.

**Citizen:** A resident of a city or town, especially one entitled to vote and enjoy other privileges there.

**Citizenship:** The position of a citizen with its duties, rights, and privileges.

**Civic values:** Values relating to, or belonging to a city, a citizen, or citizenship; municipal or civil.

**Civil rights:** The rights belonging to a citizen, such as civil liberties, due process, equal protection of the laws, and freedom from discrimination.

**Democracy:** Government ruled by the people.

**Ethnic group:** People of the same race or nationality who share a culture.

**Genocide:** The systematic and planned extermination of an entire national, racial, political, or ethnic group.

**Hero:** A man of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities. A person who, in the opinion of others, has heroic qualities or has performed a heroic act and is regarded as a model or ideal.

**Holocaust:** The genocide of European Jews and others by the Nazis during World War II.

**Human rights:** The basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, often held to include the right to life and liberty, freedom of thought and expression, and equality before the law.



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**Ideology:** A set of doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of a political, economic, or other system.

**Individual rights to life:** One of the principals upon which democracy is based.

**Jews:** One who practices the religion of Judaism, having its spiritual and ethical principles based upon the Hebrew Scriptures and the Talmud.

**Justice:** The quality of being just; fairness.

**Nazi Germany:** The Nazi dictatorship under Hitler (1933-1945).

**Political systems:** The members of a social organization who are in power.

**Power:** The might of a nation, political organization, or similar group.

**Religion:** A set of beliefs, values, and practices based upon a belief in a creator of the universe.

**Respect for minority rights:** One of the principals upon which democracy is based.

**Terrorism:** The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of frightening or forcing societies or governments, into action, often for ideological or political reasons.

**Values:** A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable.

**World War II:** A war fought from 1939 to 1945, in which Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, the United States, China, and other allies defeated Germany, Italy, and Japan.