

# LESSON: Janine May Levine

## Grade Level:

This unit was developed for secondary students. The approach and materials for this unit follow the [Age Appropriate Guidelines from the USHMM](#).

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## Subject:

History; English/Language Arts; Multi-disciplinary.

## Rationale:

The stories of individuals during the Holocaust can help us understand various facets of history through the eyes of those who lived through it. This story helps to broaden understanding about the experience of a young French Jewish girl who managed to evade capture by the Nazis during World War II.

## Overview:

### Key Question(s):

- Who was Janine May Levine? What was her experience during the Holocaust?
- How did Janine's experience illustrate some aspects of the Jewish experience in France during the war?
- What experiences did Janine have during this time that may have been different than someone in other areas of Nazi-occupied Europe?

### Educational Outcomes. At the end of this lesson, the students will be able to:

- Define the Holocaust and antisemitism.
- Identify who Janine May Levine was and what her journey was like during the Holocaust.
- Compare and contrast information shared in text and in a podcast.
- Explain the situation of a divided France during World War II.
- Identify how divided France presented unique situations for the Jews who lived in this nation.
- Create an informative piece to share information about the story of Jews in France during World War II.

## Teacher Preparation

It's important for teachers to familiarize themselves with the [Pedagogical Principles for Teaching the Holocaust](#). We encourage teachers to familiarize themselves with background knowledge on the Holocaust by viewing this [site](#) at the USHMM and view the [Introduction to the Holocaust](#). Additional information on teaching about this topic can be learned from the full-length version of [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#).

In addition, we suggest:

- Prepare access to handout and student packet.
- Check access to related links.
- Consider having students complete the [What was the Holocaust? Activity](#).
- Identify any terms students may be unfamiliar with in the written text or the podcast.

## Materials

- Janine May Levine's narrative in [To Life: The Past is Present](#)
- Janine May Levine Podcast: For Whom the Bell Tolls
- [USHMM Holocaust Encyclopedia Article: France](#)

## Lesson:INTRODUCTION

1. If students have not previously discussed the Holocaust, begin with an overview of the term, Holocaust, as defined by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:

*The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored, persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945 across Europe and North Africa. The height of the persecution and murder occurred during World War II. By the end of the war in 1945, the Germans and their collaborators had killed nearly two out of every three European Jews. The Nazis believed that Germans were racially superior.*

*They believed Jews were a threat to the so-called German racial community. While Jews were the primary victims, the Nazis also targeted other groups for persecution and murder. The Nazis claimed that Roma, people with disabilities, some Slavic peoples (especially Poles and Russians), and Black people were biologically inferior. The regime persecuted other groups because of politics, ideology, or behavior. These groups included Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, gay men, and people the Nazis called "asocials" and "professional criminals."*

For younger students, or students previously familiar with this event in history, you can utilize this shortened definition:

*The state-sponsored systematic murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators. Sinti-Roma, Poles, people with physical and mental disabilities,*

*homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents were also targeted by the Nazis.*

2. Share with students that today we will be learning about the story of Janine May Levine. Janine was a young French Jewish woman who survived the Holocaust in France while also assisting the French underground.
3. Often when we think of the Holocaust, we think about Germany or Eastern European countries; yet, many other nations were also affected including France.
4. Share with students that during this lesson, they will learn about Janine's story, as well as the larger history of France during the Holocaust.

## **RESEARCH/ANALYSIS/CREATION/COMMUNICATION**

1. Explain to students that they will be assigned one of two ways to learn about Janine and her experience during the Holocaust - through a podcast or through a written narrative. Each group will read/listen then create a list of things they learned specific to Janine's story and then also questions they have about the wider experience of Jews in France during the Holocaust.
2. Once each group has created their initial lists, recreate new groups or partnerships that bring together students who learned from each medium. Ask groups to create a new co-mingled list from both mediums. As they create this list, they should compare and contrast their learning experiences. What questions arose out of each medium? What questions were similar and which ones were different?
3. Next, have students turn to the Holocaust Encyclopedia article on France. As students read, individually or as a group, have them underline or highlight information that helps to answer the questions they have posed.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. To conclude the activity, gather students together and discuss all or some of the following:
  - a. Describe the basic arc of Janine's experience during the Holocaust.
  - b. How was Janine's experience impacted by her geography - what was the story of France and the Holocaust that intersected with Janine's story?
  - c. What did you learn about France during the Holocaust that you did not previously know? How is this experience different from your prior knowledge about other locations impacted by the Holocaust?
  - d. What questions do you still have? What resources might you be able to consult to learn more in order to answer these questions?
2. Have students conclude the activity by sharing a piece of information they learned during this experience that they plan to share with a friend or family member, and why they chose that information.