

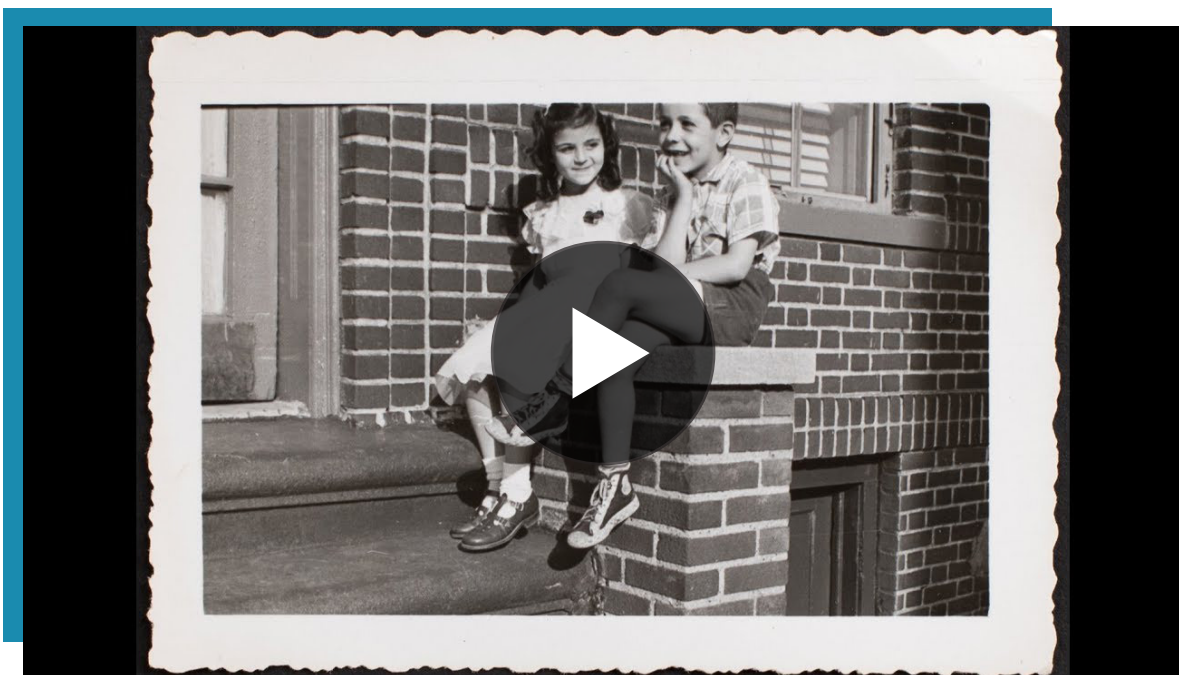
Ann Erlich

CURRICULUM TOPICS:

1. Displaced Persons Camps
2. How people came to the US during after the Holocaust
3. The experience of immigrants/Holocaust survivors in the United States

SUMMARY OF VIDEO:

Ann Erlich speaks about her life as a child of Holocaust survivors. Born in a Displaced Persons camp in Mittenwald, Germany, Ann is the oldest child of a young couple whose large Polish Jewish families were destroyed by the Nazis. Ann explains how, when she was young, her parents did not talk about their past and focused all their energy on making a new life in America. Their luck in being sponsored by an American soldier, who almost forgot about them when they got off the boat, shows the complete trust that the young refugees had in a kind stranger who eventually became a friend. Ann tells stories of the network of relationships that were needed just to find a place to live, and the reliance her parents had on her as a young girl who could translate English to Yiddish when they struggled to get settled. Her story describes the close-knit community of refugee friends that helped each other with every aspect of life in a new country. It is fascinating to hear how similar her family's concerns were to new immigrants coming to the U.S. today.





Topic #1: Displaced Persons Camps

Resources

- [Images of Displaced Persons Camps 1945-1956](#)
- [GHI Images of Displaced Persons Camps](#)
- [Vashem article about Displaced Persons Camps](#)
- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum resources on Displaced Persons Camps](#)
- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum additional resources](#)

Discussion questions:

- Why did Ann's parents live in a Displaced Persons Camp?
- What happened to people who could not return home after they survived the concentration camps?

Topic #2: How people came to the US during and after the Holocaust (sponsorships, refugees- what are the differences?)

Resources

- [The Seven Steps Refugees needed to complete to obtain a US Visa in the 1930s](#)
- How Displaced Persons entered the US after the war
 - [Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons](#)
 - [Displaced Persons Act of 1948](#)

Connection to today:

Research an organization either local or national that helps immigrants find housing and work when they come to America. How are these organizations similar or different from sponsorships after the war? Organization examples:

- [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society \(HIAS\)](#)
- [Ithaca Welcomes Refugees](#)
- [International Rescue Community](#)
- [UNICEF](#)
- [Cornell Law School Farmworker Legal Assistance- Beth Lyon](#)

Curriculum

Discussion or project/research questions:

- How was Ann's family sponsored to come to the US?
- Have you ever helped a stranger? What did you do? How did it make you feel afterward?
- How did Sponsorship work during the Holocaust? Compare it with Sponsorship today.
- How have citizenship requirements change over time in America? Was it harder after WWII to become a citizen than it is now?

Additional Resources:

- [American citizenship education curriculum](#)
- [What is a refugee?](#)
- [Refugee Act of 1980](#)

Topic #3: The experience of immigrants/Holocaust survivors in the United States

- Discussion questions
- Name three examples from Ann's story about what it was like to be an immigrant in the United States.
- What advantages did Ann's family have in coming to America that other immigrant families may not have experienced?
- Why do you think Holocaust survivors and their children often kept quiet about their lived and shared experiences when they came over to America?

Final note: Ann Erlich's story reflects many current issues for refugees. It's important to stress that immigration issues and anti-semitism are still ever present in our society today.