

Kurt Gottfreid

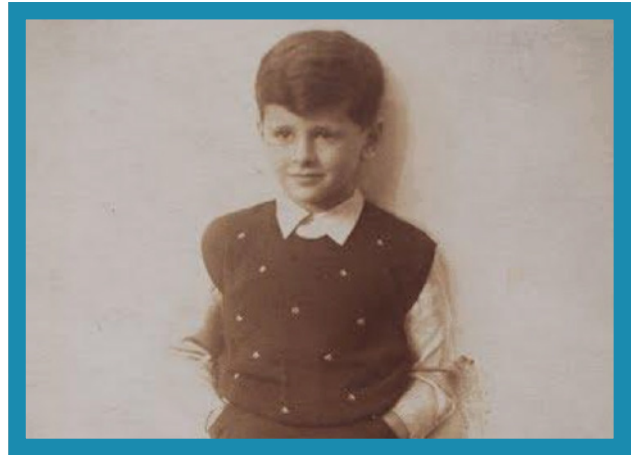
CURRICULUM TOPICS:

1. Anschluss
2. Kristallnacht
3. Leaving Europe

SUMMARY OF VIDEO:

Kurt was born in 1929 in Vienna to a family originating in Romania and Poland. Although he had a doctorate in Chemistry, Kurt's father was unable to find work as a scientist in Austria due to anti-Semitism. Instead, he started a small company in the small apartment where the family lived, manufacturing ski-bindings. Kurt attended an integrated school (Jews and non-Jews) on the grounds

of the Schonbrunn Summer Palace in Vienna. After Hitler annexed Austria (the Anschluss), Kurt attended a segregated school (Jews only) in another neighborhood. He recalls the Kristallnacht as Nazi's rifled through and stole their precious belongings. Soon after, the family left Vienna by train to Cologne, Germany and paid a smuggler to get them across the Dutch-German border and then to Antwerp in Belgium. They were in Antwerp for about 8 months, while Kurt's father tried to make arrangements to leave Europe. In August 1939, they were able to leave for Montreal, Canada, where a colleague of Kurt's father, who was in the ski-binding business sponsored them. Kurt spent the rest of his teenage years in Montreal, and went on to become a world-renowned physicist and human rights activist.





Curriculum

Topic #1 - Anschluss

Resources

- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum - Anschluss overview](#)
- Jews wait in line at the Margarethen police station for exit visas after Germany's annexation of Austria (the Anschluss)

Discussion Questions:

- What did the Anschluss mean to Kurt's family?
- German law restricted the number of Jewish students who could attend schools in 1935. What impact did the Anschluss have on Kurt's schooling?
- What does the segregation of businesses and schools in Austria remind you of in American history?



Topic #2 - Kristallnacht

Resources

- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum overview of Vienna, including Kristallnacht in Vienna](#)
- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum overview of Kristallnacht](#)
- [US Holocaust Memorial Museum - photos of Vienna, Kristallnacht](#)

Discussion questions:

- Describe the characteristics of Kristallnacht in Vienna.
- What were Kurt's memories, as a child, during the Kristallnacht?

Topic #3 - Leaving Europe

Discussion questions:

- What was the scariest thing for Kurt about being smuggled to Belgium? Can you think of a comparable situation today in which people are being smuggled to safety?
- Kurt's family had to be sponsored as refugees. What does it mean to sponsor a refugee? What responsibilities does that entail?

Additional resources:

- [Union of Concerned Scientists - Kurt Gottfried](#)

