



# Religious Life of Jewish Refugees in Wales

## GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

This is one of 20 about the Holocaust and Wales. It explores the religious life of Jewish refugees in Wales.

**Ages:** 9-14.

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE RESOURCE

Learning about the Holocaust through local examples allows learners to **discover their heritage** and **develop a sense of place and cynefin**. It also removes the idea of 'otherness' – that this happened to other people in another place and time – and instead, **creates feelings of connection and empathy**.

### 2. LEARNING AIMS

The aim of the resource is to enable learners to:

1. Explore past and contemporary ethical and moral issues and engage with concepts of prejudice, discrimination, antisemitism, extremism, equality, tolerance, humanity, responsibility, good, and evil, make a connection between past and present issues and consider what is happening locally and globally today.
2. Develop critical and reflective thinking.
3. Develop confidence, resilience, and empathy: to become more aware of their own experiences and feelings when engaging in activities with others, and to recognise that other people have experiences and feelings.
4. Become responsible citizens in Wales and the wider world.

### 3. FOCUS OF THE RESOURCE

1. Critically reviewing how past and contemporary events are perceived, interpreted, and represented; forming their own viewpoint and developing self-awareness.
2. Critically analysing and evaluating evidence; interpreting and synthesising information; drawing informed conclusions about the world, its past, present, and future.
3. Learning about the complexity and diversity of human societies (e.g., values, social norms, rituals, and faiths) and the impact of actions and beliefs.
4. Developing an understanding of challenges and opportunities in their personal lives and wider society and considering how to respond ethically.

#### 4. WHAT SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERIENCE THE RESOURCE HELPS DEVELOP

Indicators of learning:

1. Knowledge and understanding about the religious life of Jewish refugees in Wales: religious services, *cheder*, and *kosher* food.
2. Ability to find, critically evaluate, and use different sources (e.g., photographs and oral histories) to form and express their own views, opinions, knowledge, and understanding.
3. Understanding of ethical and moral concepts, e.g., discrimination, racism, antisemitism, and the importance of democratic values and human rights.
4. Ability to make a connection between past and contemporary discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and religion and consider what is happening today in Wales, the UK, and the world, e.g., refugees coming to the UK/Wales.
5. Understanding that people have different beliefs, values, and experiences and respecting the needs and rights of others.
6. Ability to work as part of a team.
7. Experience of participating in group discussions and tasks.
8. Becoming more aware of their own experiences and feelings, values, and beliefs and being able to communicate them.
9. Developing empathy for other people and their circumstances/challenges they face(d), e.g. children who came to the UK on Kindertransport, or modern-day refugees.

#### 5. HOW THE RESOURCE SUPPORTS LEARNING IN LOCAL (CYNEFIN), NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS

This resource allows learners to hear the stories of people who were directly affected by the Holocaust, and who lived in Wales. These are the stories of people who contributed to and were part of their local Welsh communities. They settled and had families here and their history is part of the story of Wales.

These local examples can help learners understand the connection between Welsh history and global events like World War Two and the Holocaust.

#### 6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*Cheder*:

*Cheder* are religious classes for primary school children teaching the basics of Jewish religion and traditions. The children also learn how to read Hebrew and understand some basic Hebrew vocabulary. Regular attendance at *cheder* is normally a prerequisite for boys and girls being allowed to read a portion from the Torah for their *Bar Mitzvah* and *Bat Mitzvah*.

*Kosher* food:

Jewish dietary laws, rooted in religion, specify which foods Jews can or cannot eat. The laws also prescribe how the food is prepared both before it reaches the home and within it. Generally, the more Orthodox a person's background, the more closely observed these rules are.

## 7. IDEAS and QUESTIONS

1. This resource can be used to explore the religious life of Jewish refugees in Wales and understand the importance of religion in their everyday lives.

Questions:

- Why was religious observance important to Jewish refugees?
- What obstacles did Jewish refugees in Wales encounter when practising their religion?

2. This resource can be used to explore Jewish religious practices.

Questions:

- What do learners know about Jewish religious practices, e.g., attending synagogue, religious schooling, and dietary laws?
- What is *cheder*?
- What are Jewish dietary laws?
- What is *kosher* food?

Ask learners to look at the images of the popular Welsh dishes and, discuss, in pairs, if the dishes are *kosher* or non-*kosher*. They should write their replies on the activity sheet and then discuss their answers as a class.

Correct answers are given below with an explanation as to why a certain dish is not *kosher*:

- Welsh cakes: *KOSHER*.
- Welsh meatballs (*faggots*): NOT *KOSHER* – these contain pork mince, which is forbidden under *kashrut*.
- Glamorgan sausage: *KOSHER* – these sausages contain no meat, although the cheese used must be certified *kosher* (some cheeses use an enzyme, rennet, from an animal's stomach to set the cheese and therefore are not *kosher* because they mix milk with 'meat' in the process of making the cheese).
- Cawl with Caerphilly cheese: NOT *KOSHER* – mixing meat and dairy (including cheese or butter) is forbidden under *kashrut*.
- Conwy mussels: NOT *KOSHER* – shellfish is forbidden under *kashrut*.
- Fish and chips: *KOSHER* as long as they are not cooked in lard (pig fat).

Interesting fact: fish and chips were first introduced to the UK by Jewish migrants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

3. The resource can be used to explore and gain an understanding of the importance of tolerance and empathy in an open, democratic society.

Questions:

- How do learners respond to religious practices other than theirs?
- Why it is important to respect the religion of other people?

- How do beliefs, rituals, values, and social norms/practices impact learners' decisions and actions? How can they help them to act responsibly and ethically?

If you have Jewish learners in your class, you may wish to encourage them to share their own experiences.

## 8. RESEARCH AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### 1. Introduction to teaching and learning about the Holocaust:

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) [Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust](#) provide information on why, what, and how to teach about the Holocaust.

The Holocaust Educational Trust's worksheet '[Defining the Holocaust](#)' may be used to introduce learners to the topic of the Holocaust; it helps learners to think about how the Holocaust is defined and why the issue of definition is important.

### 2. Further reading:

- *Cheder*:

Wikipedia: [Cheder](#).

- *Kosher* food:

Chabad.org: [What Is Kosher?](#)

Jewish Virtual Library: [Jewish Dietary Laws \(Kashrut\): Overview of Laws & Regulations](#).

- Elen Davies:

Ellen Davis, *Kerry's Children: A Jewish Childhood in Nazi Germany and Growing up in South Wales* (Bridgend: Seren, 2004).

- Gwrych Castle:

Refugees from National Socialism in Wales: [Gwrych Castle](#).

Erwin Seligmann, *Our Cultural Work, Gwrych Castle Yearbook 1939/40* (Wiener Holocaust Library, OSP3600).

### 3. A list of 20 resources about [the Holocaust and Wales](#):

- [Kindertransport 1: Jewish Life in Central Europe before the Second World War.](#)
- [Kindertransport 2: The Journey to Britain.](#)
- [Kindertransport 3: Arrival in Wales.](#)
- [Kindertransport 4: Life in Wales.](#)
- [Memories of Kristallnacht: Destruction and Flight.](#)
- [Memories of Kristallnacht: The Last Bar Mitzvah.](#)

- [Jewish Artists in Wales: Josef Herman.](#)
- [Jewish Artists in Wales: Heinz Koppel.](#)
- [Aero Zipp Fasteners at Treforest Trading Estate.](#)
- [General Paper and Box Manufacturing Company at Treforest Trading Estate.](#)
- ['Enemy Aliens' and Internment Camps.](#)
- ['Enemy Aliens' and Human Rights.](#)
- [Jewish Refugees as Domestic Servants.](#)
- [Jewish Refugee Doctors, Dentists, and Nurses in Wales.](#)
- [Jewish Refugees in the British Army during the Second World War.](#)
- [Religious Life of Jewish Refugees in Wales.](#)
- [The Welsh Language.](#)
- [Liberation.](#)
- [Identity.](#)
- [Remembering the Holocaust.](#)