

## ID Card Activity

---

### Introduction

---

Those involved in the Holocaust can be placed in categories **based on their choices and behavior.**

**1. We are categorizing behaviors, not people.**

Avoid “stereotyping” - an oversimplified generalization about a person. Do not to judge an individual based on stereotypes but rather based on their individual choices.

**2. A person is not necessary in a category permanently – choices are fluid.**

An individual could make a choice to be a perpetrator in one instance and make a choice to be a rescuer in another instance.

**3. These categories are not mutually exclusive.**

Some people can be in more than one category at the same time.

### Methodology

---

**1. The Holocaust:**

The Holocaust is the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945.

**2. Introduce Categories of Behavior**

**Perpetrators** | Who was responsible for the Holocaust?

- Individuals or groups who **chose** to violate human rights.
- Perpetrators were not born with hatred – they were taught hatred.
- Beware of over-characterizing them as something greater than what they were. The perpetrators were human beings.

**Collaborators** | Who helped Hitler and the Nazis?

- Individuals or groups who **chose** to work with the Nazis regardless of whether they shared a common goal or believed in the Nazi racial ideology.
- Collaborators made the **choice** to join or assist the Nazis for many reasons. Be sure to contextualize the choices of collaborators. Do not stereotype groups or individuals who chose to collaborate.
- Examples: The Axis powers that enforced anti-Jewish laws, Norwegian police who assisted in deportations of Jews to Auschwitz, villagers in Poland who dug mass graves for bodies after shootings.

## **Targets<sup>1</sup>** | Who was targeted during the Holocaust?

- Groups and individuals who were targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons.
- Jews were targeted by the Nazis for racial reasons, not religious reasons. Jews were the primary victims.
- Roma and Sinti, people with mental and physical disabilities, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons.
- Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi Germany.

## **Rescuers & Resistance** | How might someone resist the Nazis?

- Individuals or groups of individuals who made **choices** and risked their own lives to save others and stand up against bigotry, prejudice, and hate.
- Resistance can take many forms: escaping arrest, going into hiding, keeping a diary.
- Although stories of **rescue** are very popular, only a tiny percentage of the targeted populations was rescued.

---

<sup>1</sup> Targets are the exception to the rule about categorizing according to choices. However, many targets made choices that would categorize their behavior in one or more of the other categories simultaneously to being a target.

**Bystanders** | Which category do you think had the most people? Why do you think the behavior of most people falls into this category?

- Bystanders are witnesses to the Holocaust who remained silent, passive, and indifferent. These are groups, nations and individuals who **chose** to do nothing.
- It is vital to teach and discuss the consequences of when people make the choice to be a bystander.

### **3. Prepare for Cards**

- a. There were millions of people involved in the Holocaust. The Holocaust took place in countries throughout Europe.
- b. Explain that these cards represent stories of people impacted by the Holocaust. These people existed, and some are still alive today.
- c. Instruct students to think about the choices the person made or the choices the people around them made when reading their card.
- d. Ask students to consider in which category the person on their card might be placed.

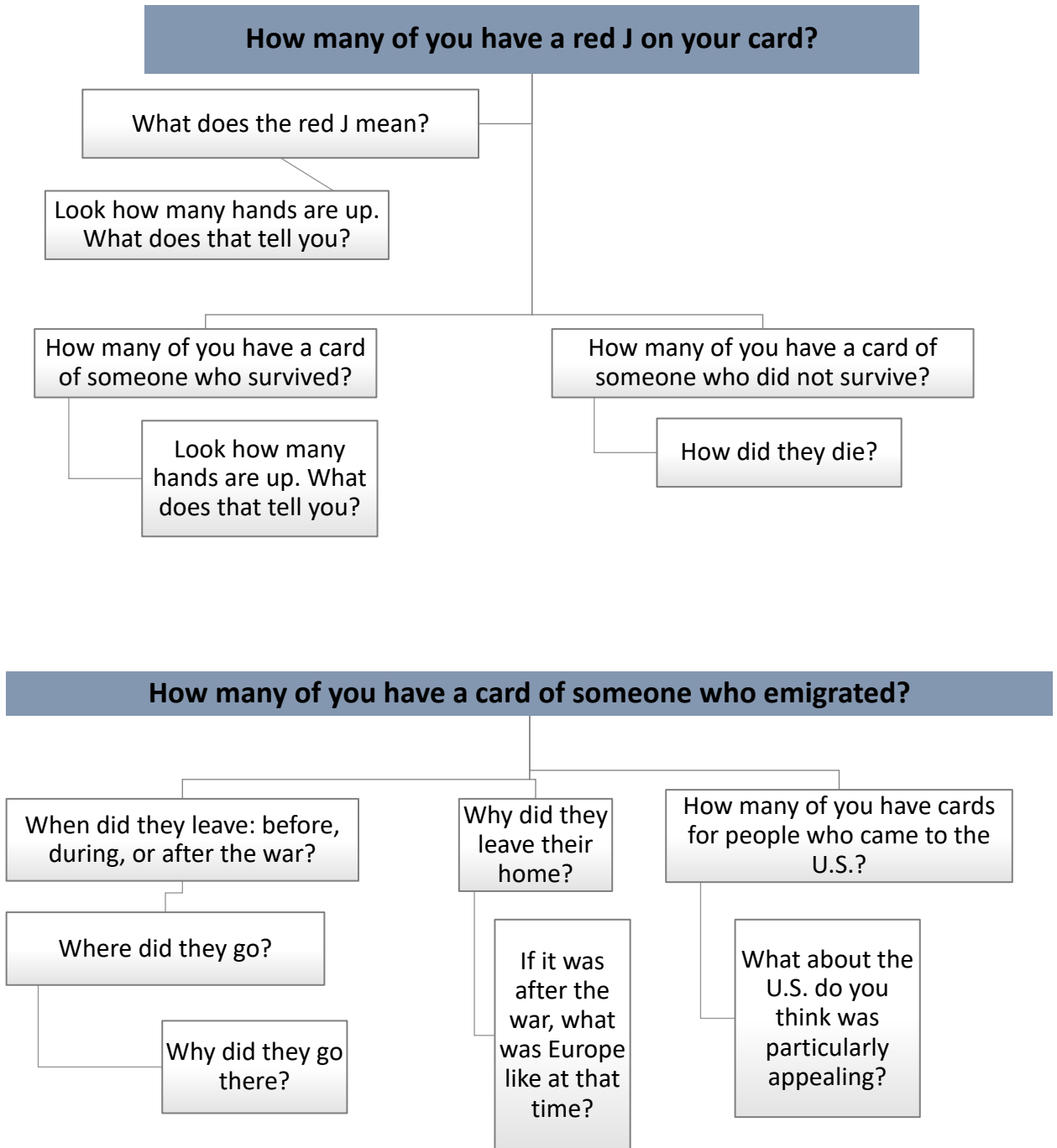
### **4. Distribute Cards**

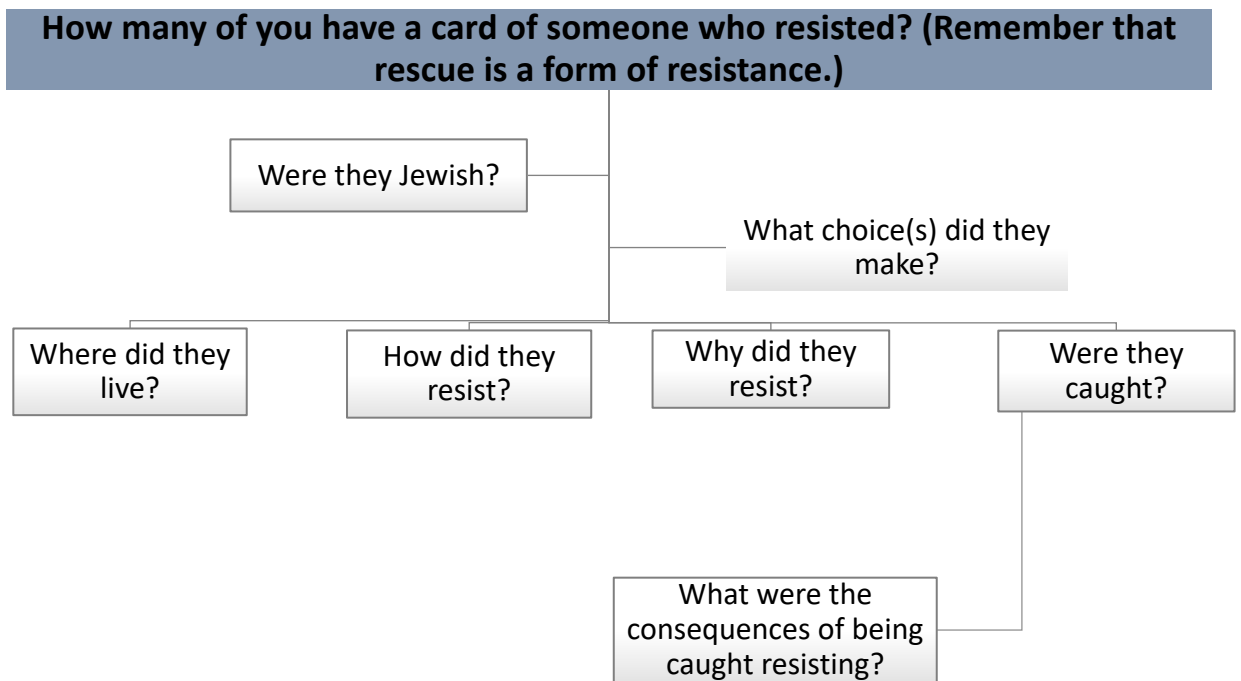
- a. Allow a few minutes for students to read the cards silently to themselves.
- b. Before beginning the series of questions, you may allow the opportunity for students to ask about unfamiliar vocabulary words. Common words may include Auschwitz, concentration camp, extermination camp, partisan, gypsy, Jehovah's Witness, and euthanasia.

### **5. Initiate Series of Questions**

- a. **Do not use "you"** when asking the questions about the cards. Instead, use "your card" "your person" or "the person on the card."
- b. Do not put or ask your students to think about themselves in these situations. Do not ask your students what they would have done. Ask them what they will do in situations where they have a choice to make.

- c. The following are basic questions to ask to illustrate on a relatable scale the number of targets, resisters, and rescuers, as well as the number of survivors. Adjust specific follow-up questions to individuals and timeframes.





## 6. Conclude the Activity

- Allow for follow-up questions or inform them to save their questions for the tour.
- Instruct the group to pass their cards to the front to be collected.

## 7. Transition

“The story on your card is one story among millions from this period of history. Think about what we discussed as you tour the exhibit. Think about the person on your card as we learn about Anne Frank.”