



# HerStories

*Telling Jewish women's stories*

## The Story of Vera Szekeres-Varsa

**Duration:** 60 minutes + presentation (10-20 minutes)

**Age group:** grades 9-12

**Number of students:** 5-6 in a small group, as many groups as facilitators

**Materials:**

- Vera's photos printed with a short story of the photo on the back
- Vera's short story printed (one copy for each student)

### **Workshop description:**

1. Photo viewing (15-20 minutes)

In small groups of 5-6 students, each student receives a printed photo from Vera. Their task is to write down everything that comes to mind about the photo:

- Where and when could this photo have been taken?
- If there are several people in the photo, what might their relationship be?
- On what occasion or in what situation was the photo taken?
- How do the people in the photo feel?
- What else can you learn about Vera from the photo?

They can write these down on the edge of the photo or, if the photos are laminated, on sticky notes that they stick to the edge.

Once everyone has finished writing about the first photo, they pass it to the person on their right and receive a new one. They repeat the same task as in the first round until they run out of ideas. Then they pass the photos around again, and so on, until the photos have been passed around and everyone has their original photo back.

2. Story reading (5-10 minutes)

We collect the photos and hand out Vera's short story for everyone to read silently.



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### 3. Creating still images (30 minutes)

We tell everyone to choose a photo, on the back of which they will read what Vera said about the photo during the interview. We briefly summarize the topics for them, as it is not always clear what each photo is about (1-2. childhood, 3. marriage, children, university, 4. university studies, work, 5. political activity, activism). Their task will be to use the description of the picture to figure out what and how they could best present that period of Vera's life in a still image. The still image is a situation in which the participants pose like statues in a frozen snapshot. Each of the 5-6 students will be the director of a still image, and the facilitator will help them come up with the image, who should play which role, and how they should stand. The other students and the facilitator can also be actors. If the still images are presented to the others at the end of the workshop, the actors will pose as statues, and the director of the image will briefly summarize to the audience what they see in the image and what else Vera said about that period.

Coming up with the pictures, rehearsing, and preparing takes about 30 minutes.

### 4. Presentation (10-20 minutes)

At the end of the workshop, each group shows the other groups their 5-6 still images (5 minutes per group).



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