

# Discussing 20th century Jewish history through photographs

**Pedagogical concept:** This exercise is meant to encourage students to look beyond the image. Students should develop **values** such as **empathy** by relating to the people in the photo.

The activity includes a **discussion** about the significance of photos in which students are asked to explain why photos are important in general and why specifically photos shared by Holocaust survivors are a unique historical source.

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Necessary materials:**

- Printed photos from this file:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nAmIBil6dqAu5pqYmP0WbWq0Fj6zG63Y/edit?usp=drivesdk&oid=109858598847844940033&rtpof=true&sd=true>

**Level:** Simple

**Description of the activity/methods:**

1. Print out photos from the file in "Necessary materials"
2. With your students, discuss categories and key topics (such as emancipation, integration, assimilation, patriotism, identity, religious life etc.) that can be seen in the photographs
3. With your students, discuss the significance of photos now and then. Why were / are photos important? How do photos from pre-1945 differ from photos from today? Do you see any parallels between these old photos and your own family photos?
4. *Optional exercise:* Have students imagine the stories behind the photos; write a letter / social media post. This activity allows students to engage in creative writing exercises while developing empathy for the people in the photos.

*Note:* The teacher should give clear instructions as to what the letter/ social media post is allowed to include, and that the dignity of the portrayed person needs to be safeguarded.