

*Hearing a  
Holocaust survivor  
speak...*



**Holocaust Education Trust Ireland**  
*Learning from the past - lessons for today*

Thank you for inviting a Holocaust survivor to visit and speak at your school. These guidelines are presented as suggestions that may prove useful for the logistical arrangements for the occasion.

### Age Appropriate

This programme is specifically for Transition Year and Senior Cycle students.

### Fees

HETI does not charge for facilitating Holocaust survivors to speak in schools. We would ask you to reimburse your speaker's travel expenses of €25 or €50 for Dublin or outside Dublin respectively. Some schools like to make a voluntary donation to HETI which is always very much appreciated.

### Speaking Schedule

The demand for Holocaust survivors to speak at schools is very high. We are aware of the impact a Holocaust survivor makes on students and wish we could accommodate all schools as often as they would like. We have therefore set up a 3-year cycle for survivors to speak at schools. This will ensure that the new intake of Transition Year students and the rest of the Senior Cycle students avail of the opportunity to hear a survivor speak of his personal experiences during the Holocaust at least once during their time in secondary school.

### Before

It is a very special and unique opportunity to hear a Holocaust survivor speak of his or her personal experiences. We would urge you to maximise the occasion and to have as many students and staff as possible attend. All students from 15 to 18 years would benefit from this unique opportunity regardless of whether or not they are studying History.



*Tomi Reichental speaking at Moyle Park College, Dublin.*

### Numbers

We recommend that a minimum of 100 students attend the talk. Your speaker is comfortable with a large audience, even up to 300 – 400. When numbers are fewer than 100, we suggest opening the talk to parents, school governors, youth groups, societies and other organisations.

### Timing

- Many schools arrange a double period or two hours for this special occasion.
- Allow time to introduce the speaker.
- Allow time afterwards for questions and for photographs.
- Designate someone to "chair" the question section

### Be prepared

It is helpful if some study of the period of history that incorporates World War II and the Nazi Holocaust takes place before the survivor comes to speak. One needs to be aware of the extent of the power of the Nazis as they swept through Europe, persecuting and murdering those whom they considered 'lesser humans'.

There were just over 9 million Jews living in Europe before the war, out of which 6 million perished at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators. Millions of other victims also perished due to their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliations or religious beliefs.

We have a handful of Jewish Holocaust survivors living in Ireland. Your speaker will convey personal experiences and not the entire history of the period.

The Holocaust ended in 1945, when many of the survivors were only children. Most are over seventy years of age (some are older) and many are parents and grandparents today. Survivors realise the importance of telling their stories in person before they become legends consigned to a page in history.

It is important to understand that this is an emotional event and very draining for your speaker. We would therefore not arrange for him to speak more than once in a day.

Ensure that you share any information about particular sensitivities within your school or classroom which may affect what the survivor may say.

## Greeting

It is a good idea to designate one or two people to greet your speaker when he/she arrives and someone to escort your visitor off the premises when the visit is over. Make sure that your speaker and the HETI office have a contact number for someone at the school in case it is required.

## The talk

- A working microphone is important. The speaker will decide if he/she wishes to use it.
- Designate someone to introduce your guest. Designate someone to thank your guest.
- HETI will provide a short biography of your speaker to help with the introduction.
- A glass of water on the podium is important and a box of tissues is also useful. A nice hot cup of coffee afterwards is always appreciated. Some speakers prefer to sit at a table or desk.

## Records

It is a good idea to organise photographs, video and sound recording of the talk. If you do record the occasion, Holocaust Education Trust Ireland would very much appreciate a copy of the photographs, video or tape for our archives. These are unique and precious documents that need to be archived for posterity. You may wish to include something about the survivor's talk in the school magazine.



## Online Crocus Club

We invite students and teachers to join the Online Crocus Club where they can post photographs, and exchange news and experiences

about hearing a survivor speak at their schools. Through the forum HETI would be pleased to hear of film and book reviews and other media events pertaining to the Holocaust. The Online Crocus Club provides an opportunity to make new friends in Ireland and abroad and perhaps to consider exchange visits with other schools:

[www.hetireland.org/crocus](http://www.hetireland.org/crocus)



*Tomi Reichental*

## Afterwards

It is useful and helpful to have a session after the talk to reflect on it and to discuss feelings and impressions. It is interesting to consider the issues that arise and their relevance today.

## Learning

As Ireland becomes a more diverse society, we encourage everyone to learn the lessons of the Holocaust and to embrace tolerance, inclusion and integration.

## Assignments

There are many ways to acknowledge a survivor's visit to your school.

### Holocaust Memorial Day - commemorating the Holocaust

International Holocaust Memorial Day is on the 27th January every year. Holocaust Education Trust Ireland would encourage schools to mark this day by holding a ceremony or an event to commemorate the occasion. This can range from special readings to an event that involves the whole class and even the whole school and wider community. HETI can provide assistance and guidelines in organising a Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration. Contact the HETI office for further information.

Poetry, Art, Drama, Music and Essays are all excellent ways to express impressions on what one has learned by hearing a Holocaust survivor speak. The school may wish to organise a display or a competition in these subjects. There are many other forms of assignments that can be undertaken. HETI would be pleased to hear about them and to post them on the HETI website.

## Booklist, films and websites

There are thousands of books, films and websites about the Holocaust. These are recommendations for the school library and for personal use. An age or year guide is suggested at the end of each. Books for younger students can be read by all ages, considered and reflected upon. Books and films recommended for Leaving Certificate students are appropriate for that age group.

### Booklist

**THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL (12+)**, Definitive Edition by Anne Frank translated by Susan Massotty, Puffin Books 2002

**THE BOOK THIEF (12+)** by Markus Zusak, Doubleday 2007

**THE DIARY OF PETR GINZ (12+)** edited by Chava Pressburger, Atlantic Books 2007

**FATELESS (15+)** by Imre Kertész, Northwestern University Press 1992

**BEYOND THESE WALLS: ESCAPING THE WARSAW GHETTO, A Young Girl's Story (15+)** by Janina Bauman, Virago Modern Classics 2007

**SOPHIE SCHOLL AND THE WHITE ROSE (16+)** by Annette Dumbach and Jud Newborn, Oneworld Publications 2007

**IF THIS IS A MAN and THE TRUCE (Survival in Auschwitz) (16+)** by Primo Levi, Abacus 1991

**THE READER (16+)** by Bernhard Schlink, Phoenix 1997

### Films

#### DVDs

**SCHINDLER'S LIST (16+)**

**LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (16+)**

**THE PIANIST (16+)**

**CONSPIRACY (18+)**

**THE COUNTERFEITERS (18+)**

### Websites

[www.hetireland.org](http://www.hetireland.org)

[www.hetireland.org/crocus](http://www.hetireland.org/crocus)

[www.remember.org](http://www.remember.org)

[www.yadvashem.org.il](http://www.yadvashem.org.il)

[www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

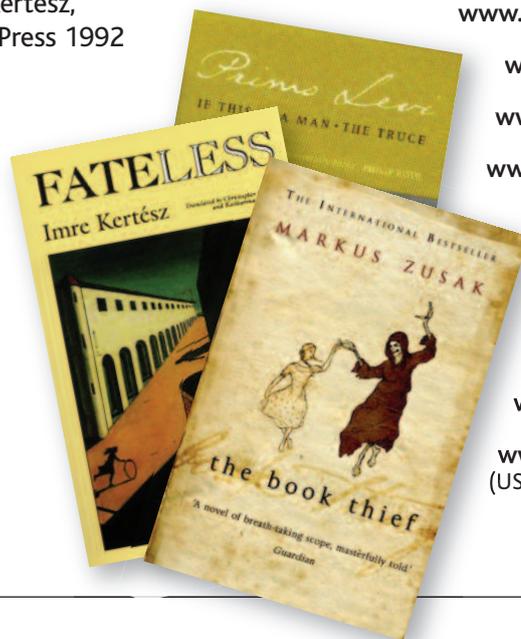
[www.holocausttaskforce.org](http://www.holocausttaskforce.org)

[www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org)  
(Anti-Defamation League)

[www.memorial-museums.net](http://www.memorial-museums.net)

[www.auschwitz.org.pl](http://www.auschwitz.org.pl)

[www.vhf.org](http://www.vhf.org)  
(USC Shoah Foundation Institute)



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Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration

## Holocaust Education Trust Ireland

Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2.

Telephone: +353-1-669 0593 Email: [info@hetireland.org](mailto:info@hetireland.org) [www.hetireland.org](http://www.hetireland.org)

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