

HISTORY UNFOLDED TEACHER GUIDE:

Engaging students in research related to the *Americans and the Holocaust* exhibition

WHAT IS HISTORY UNFOLDED?

[History Unfolded: US Newspapers and the Holocaust](#) is a nationwide project, sponsored by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, to uncover what local newspapers reported about Holocaust-related events during the 1930s and 1940s. Educators, students, and other “citizen historians” across America are helping the Museum discover how local newspapers covered the Nazi threat and how Americans reacted by looking up articles in their local newspapers and uploading them into a database that scholars and other will use in the future.

HOW DOES HISTORY UNFOLDED RELATE TO THE *AMERICANS AND THE HOLOCAUST* EXHIBIT?

By exploring the *Americans and the Holocaust* traveling exhibition, students will learn about American responses to Nazism, war, and genocide in the 1930s and 1940s. Teachers can then use History Unfolded with students in their classroom or library after visiting the exhibition to continue exploring the exhibit’s themes. Students conducting historical newspaper research using local library collections will learn what people in their own community knew and did in response to the Nazi threat.

Articles unearthed by students, teachers, and lifelong learners have expanded our understanding of how much the US press covered these events and are featured in *Americans and the Holocaust*.

HOW TO DESIGN A CLASS OR LIBRARY VISIT UTILIZING HISTORY UNFOLDED

In Your Classroom

Using the [lesson plan](#) associated with *History Unfolded*, teachers can work with librarians to provide the support and scaffolding that students need for successful historical newspaper research.

See the [Step-by-step guide](#) for guidance on how to implement *History Unfolded* in your classroom

At the Library

Teachers can work with librarians to provide the support that students need for newspaper research with collections or online databases. This checklist is intended to help teachers prepare for a class visit to perform research at their local library.

1. Communicate with the library staff well in advance of your visit. You will want to ask the following questions about access to historical newspapers at the library:
 - Does the library have historical newspaper collections from their area from the 1930s & 1940s?
 - The available collections will help you determine which [History Unfolded events](#) are possible to research. Be sure to inform library staff about specific date ranges for the events that your students plan to research. This allows them to pull relevant reels of microfilm in advance and will save time on the day of your visit.

- Are historical newspapers available on microfilm, in digital format, or both?
 - How many students can the library accommodate at one time using microfilm readers and/or computer terminals to research digitized collections?
 - Typically, students require 1-2 hours to perform their research (see [lesson plan](#)), and the space will need to be reserved; this is especially true if you are using microfilm.
 - Can students access digitized collections at the library using their own devices?
 - Can students access the library's digital historical newspaper collections online at home or in school? Does the library require a library card/account for such access?
 - Are the library's microfilm readers connected to the Internet?
 - Think about how will you plan to save and upload student research discoveries to the *History Unfolded* database. If microfilm readers are Internet-connected, then you may be able to login to *History Unfolded* and upload images directly to the project. Otherwise, you may need to save newspaper images to a USB-drive to upload later from your school. If that isn't an option either, then students may photograph newspaper images using their phone cameras to upload later at school.
2. In addition, you may want to inquire about the following logistics:
- Who will be the primary point of contact at the library for school visits?
 - Is this the same person who will be on-hand at the library to help with access to technology and microfilm readers?
 - Does the library provide parking for buses and vans?
 - Are there procedures for students to follow upon entering the library? (For example, are there items that can or should not be brought into the library?)
3. If possible, visit the library yourself in advance of bringing students to perform research. This allows you to meet library staff and discuss arrangements for space and learning procedures.
- Go through the research process yourself in order to be familiar with potential challenges.
 - Consider alternative research assignments for students who might not be able to perform microfilm or database research on-site at the library. For example, students not performing research may gather contextual information in the *Americans and the Holocaust* exhibition (at the library or [online](#)) using the [Exhibition Guide and Activity](#). If further accommodations are needed, please contact Eric Schmalz, History Unfolded Community Manager at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (eschmalz@ushmm.org).
4. Provide students with appropriate context. Students should walk into the library already knowing dates, key terms, and historical background necessary to succeed. The first three pages of the *History Unfolded student packet* assign specific tasks to students, help organize student thinking, and prepare them for their research.