

HOW TO LOCALIZE HISTORY GUIDE

Libraries and partner organizations have many opportunities to provide local connections and context to the history presented in *Americans and the Holocaust*. Patrons are likely to be engaged and find relevance when they see connections between the history and their local community. Archives, historical societies, and regional Holocaust education centers may all be able to help you find and share local historical connections and context. Below are approaches to localizing the history that are aligned with key concepts from the exhibition.

IDEAS FOR LOCALIZING HISTORY, BY EXHIBITION KEY CONCEPTS:

1) Americans Had Information

- Search the [History Unfolded: US Newspapers and the Holocaust](#) database to find and display articles from your state or city, when available. You can search *History Unfolded* for [readable articles from newspapers.com](#) and [downloadable articles](#). Research or invite patrons to find other local newspaper articles. Consider displaying full newspaper pages to allow patrons to see what other news was being reported at the time and what was being reported about the Holocaust in their town or region.
- Display physical copies of magazines from the period 1933 through 1945 with articles that address exhibition themes. This can give patrons a sense of what the United States was like in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Share information about local theaters that played newsreels during the time period, such as attendance and other details about the theater at the time. Include historical photos of the theater and where it was located on a map. Make connections to the [newsreels](#) mentioned in the *Americans and the Holocaust* online exhibition.

2) Americans Faced Many Competing Priorities

- Research and display information about the effect of the Great Depression on the local community. [As seen in History Unfolded](#) and the media newspaper kiosk as part of the *Americans* exhibition, daily newspapers reporting on the Nazi Party's persecution of Jews between 1933–1935 often printed stories about the Great Depression on the same pages.
- Research and display information about racism, discrimination, and antisemitism in the local community. Was the Ku Klux Klan active? Were there race riots? [Were Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals forcibly relocated from or to your community?](#) Did country clubs admit Jews? Did colleges in the region have quotas on the number of Jews? Did newspaper "Help Wanted" ads specify "Gentiles" or "Christians" only? Were individuals in the community members of [the German American Bund](#)?

3) Americans Debated

- Share articles from your state in [History Unfolded on the debate over whether to boycott the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games](#). It may be possible to find reactions from students at area colleges, especially if colleges had athletes competing to be on the US Olympic team.
- Find out what views politicians representing the area or state had at the time about whether to intervene in World War II prior to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, including if they supported the passage of the [Selective Service Act of 1940](#) and the [Lend-Lease Act of 1941](#). Were such politicians popular and were they reelected?
- Determine if your community had members active in the America First Committee. Research what reactions individuals and groups had to [Charles Lindbergh's September 11, 1941, speech in Des Moines, Iowa](#). You may find examples of local reactions by looking at news articles, editorials, letters to the editor, and cartoons [in History Unfolded](#).

4) Americans Responded

- Use [the History Unfolded database](#) to research how individuals and groups from your state responded to the Nazi threat. You may search by tags such as [Anti-Nazi Protests and Activism](#), [Public Responses in America](#), or [US Government Responses to the Nazi Threat](#). You may also find that [newspapers reporting on Kristallnacht](#) printed stories of local responses. For instance, some religious organizations held prayer services for the victims or invited rabbis to speak.
- Share stories of survivors who settled in the community during the Holocaust and/or of local aid organizations helping refugees at the time.

5) Americans Focused on Winning the War

- Display propaganda posters from the US government similar to the ones depicted in the *Americans and the Holocaust* exhibition if available in local archives.
- Research and share information about local war bond drives and efforts, or about how the community mobilized for the war effort
- Share information about the home front community during World War II, including the expanding role of women in the workforce and whether Black Americans were allowed to work in local defense industries.
- Share information about soldiers from the town who liberated concentration camps, and any known reactions to what they saw.
- Research and display full newspaper articles once the United States entered World War II. Often, war news dominates the newspaper pages, even when they also printed stories about the Holocaust. For example, as you can see [in History Unfolded](#) and with the newspaper media kiosk as part of the *Americans* exhibition, war news often overshadowed news about the first public reports of the murder of Jews in late November 1942.