



Circle of Life ~ A Special Act of Remembrance
A program of the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center

Sixth Grade Family Program
Sunday, January 21st

Welcome!

Before we begin, please take a few minutes to discuss these questions together as a family.

Was your family's last name changed when your ancestors immigrated to America?
If so, what did it *used* to be?

What was your mother's maiden name?
What was her family name, if it was changed when immigrating?

What countries (or cities, if known) did your father's family come from?

What countries (or cities, if known) did your mother's family come from?

What is your Hebrew Name?



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Circle of Life Research

Yad Vashem is the Israel Holocaust Museum and World Center for Holocaust Research and Education. As a family, go to their website: www.yadvashem.org. You can take some time to explore the incredible resources and educational materials they have. When you are ready, click on the “Digital Collections” tab at the top of their homepage, scroll through to the “Shoah Names Database”. Shoah is the Hebrew word for Holocaust.

Once on the “Shoah Names Database” page, click on “Advanced Search”, then use the first 3 search sections to insert information about you and your family.

- Use your names (Hebrew and/or English)
- For the birth year, be sure that you’re searching for children. The Holocaust ended in 1945, so we suggest searching for children born 1936 +/-5 years, in order to locate a boy or girl who was 13 years old or younger, at the time of their death. This might take a few different combinations and attempts. I recommend using the “soundex” search option.
- Family origin (try both of your parent’s origins)
- You do not need to fill in the “Family Members” or “Submitter” sections to search.

It will mostly likely take several different attempts and combinations to find a good match. First try just a first name match, then a last name match, then a location match... each attempt should result in multiple different options. As names are generated, feel free to click on a name that sounds familiar, there will be more information about that child, their family and where they came from and how they perished. There is usually an option to click on the country where they came from. This will provide a brief outline about the country before, during and after the Holocaust and include information about the Jewish community. This background information is very interesting and can help to give insight into this child’s life.

After you have chosen your Circle of Life child, please SAVE or PRINT the information so that you can read and research them further. This information will be very important when incorporating the Circle of Life child into your Dvar Torah.

Please check these websites for even more information:

www.jewishgen.org To located information about your child’s hometown

www.ushmm.org/wlc/en To conduct research in order to locate information about the ghetto, concentration camp or extermination camp in which your child perished.

As mentioned, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center facilitates the Circle of Life program, and is an excellent resource. Their website is www.ilholocaustmuseum.org.



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Name of Circle of Life Child:

Birth Country:

Birth Date:

Notes:



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6th Grade Family Education
January 2018



Background

Each of our families has a unique history that is complex and diverse. Where did our ancestors come from? What was their life like before coming to America? When did my family come to America? Why did they come; what circumstances did they face before coming to a new country? The majority of the American Jewish community came in a few distinct waves of immigration, often due to anti-Semitism and persecution in the “old country”; but also seeking new opportunities and a different future for their children.

Many Jews were unable to leave Europe before the Holocaust (1933-1945) though; 6 million Jews perished in the Holocaust, 1.5 million of whom were children. Of those 1.5 million children many did not have the opportunity, nor did they live to experience, becoming bar or bat mitzvah.

In just a short time, when you are called to the Torah as bar or bat mitzvah, you can use this occasion as a way to remember a child who did not have the same opportunity. We are going to explore our family history and then research information about a child who perished in the Holocaust, someone whose life ended before they reached the age of thirteen. We are going to research and find you a Circle of Life child with a similar first or last name as you or with a similar origin to your family. Please share what you’ve learned about your Circle of Life child during your Dvar Torah and with those who will help you celebrate your becoming bar or bat Mitzvah. Your act of remembrance helps to ensure that the 1.5 million Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust are not forgotten.

The Circle of Life is a program of the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center. The Museum assists Circle of Life participants in connecting with the past on a personal level, and has a wide variety of resources for students of all ages.

www.ilholocaustmuseum.org