

CHALLENGES OF SEEKING REFUGE

Student Name: _____

In your groups, discuss all of the steps you would have to take to move from where you live now to another country. Consider packing, paperwork, etc. List what you discuss below.

Now, take a look at the document about emigrating from Germany in the 1930s. List the top three things that you think would have been the hardest to get/do in order to leave the country.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Look now at the document about immigrating into the United States. Again, what are the top three obstacles that faced those wishing to come to the United States?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

According to the map provided by the USHMM, which other countries did German Jews emigrate to?

Some of the countries where people moved to would soon become controlled by Germany during World War II and the German Jews who emigrated there were in danger again. Which countries were those? List them below:

Ultimately, the question isn't "Why didn't they just leave?"...it becomes

“ _____ ?”

Salvaged Pages: Klaus Langer

Klaus was a teenager in Gleiwitz, Germany. He began his diary after his Bar Mitzvah and recorded the unfolding discrimination against the Jews of his town in the 1930s. In these excerpts, he writes about their efforts to emigrate... (pages 22-32)

November 28, 1938

On November 23, Father came home and immediately began work on the emigration process. The only two countries to which Father's pension could be transferred were Chile and Palestine. By his calculation, his income would not be enough to make a living in Palestine and the question then arose whether he would be able to supplement his pension. There was also the question whether the Nazis would continue to send his pension abroad. As an amateur musician it was almost impossible to make a living in Palestine because of the many other Jewish musicians who had emigrated there. In Chile the situation was somewhat better and it would have been possible to live there on the pension...Father had to give up hope for emigrating to Argentina. He is now hoping to get a business license for Palestine. It would be best if we could all go to Palestine.

December 14, 1938

According to the new law, Jews are allowed to take only essentials with them when they emigrate. The new regulation requires rehabilitation to the German government for the destruction caused over Kristallnacht.

December 19, 1938

Regarding the emigration of my parents, I have the following to report. First came two refusals from Argentina for lack of letters of credit. The rich uncle in America is unable to assume such a financial responsibility. We don't have an affidavit for the U.S. India requires firm employment there, or a contract. Father is now trying to make connections in India to obtain a contract. He also wrote to Peru and he was told to go to the Uruguayan consulate. Allegedly the Dominican Republic would take ten thousand Jews and provide them with visas. However, nothing further is known about that. It probably makes no sense to turn to them. However, with a Dominican Republic visa it is possible to get a half-year visa for Palestine. Shanghai also accepts Jews, even without a visa, but it's questionable how one can live there. The mail also brought no news from Palestine. We had submitted a request for 'commercial certification.'

January 5, 1939

My parents had to all but give up hope for South America. However, India is still an open possibility. If they can get there it would be very good. Their chances for emigrating to the U.S. also are very slim because they have a very high waiting number, 25,000.

January 12, 1939

Regarding their emigration, my parents have not progressed one step. As of January 1, 1939, we are required to have an identity card. In providing personal information the official asked my father's hair color. My father is bald. I must really admire my parents. Despite having been rejected, disappointed, having suffered hardships and daily aggravations, they did not lose their good humor.

July 15, 1939

My parents finally have something that might work with regard to their emigration. A Chilean visa costs about seventy pounds, which my parents somehow obtained. Unfortunately, all the ships for Chile are booked until December. However, that still represents a possibility.

August 19, 1939

My parents are still trying to get papers for Chile. At the moment, it does not look good.

Klaus' parents and grandmother were not able to emigrate from Germany. His mother died of blood poisoning on Sept. 8, 1941, in Essen. His father was deported on April 21, 1942 to the Izbica Libelska camp in Poland. By the end of that year, the local Jews from Izbica and those who came there from other locations had been taken to the death camps at Belzec or Sobibor, or had been shot. Klaus' father was among them. His grandmother was sent to Terezin on July 15, 1942 and only a few months later was deported to Minsk, where she perished. Klaus emigrated to Palestine, arriving in January 1940.

Salvaged Pages: Klaus Langer

In the digital version of *Salvaged Pages*, the editor chose to read and discuss just one of the diary entries printed on the previous page. Which one do you think that she chose and why?

Which one do you think that she chose? (Give the date) _____

Why do you think she would choose that one?

Which one did she actually choose? _____

In the first video discussion, Zapruder connects the diary entry that she chooses to an event that is not mentioned in the diary...

What is the event?

How does this event connect to Langer's diary entry?

What is one reason why Zapruder believes that the diary entries of these young writers are important to read?

In the second video discussion, Zapruder says that diary entries can also give little hints and clues about things you might otherwise miss...

Which part of the diary entry does she use as an example of this?

What is happening in America at this time?

What are some other possibilities to explain the actions of Klaus' relative that help change your perspective?

In the final video discussion, Zapruder gives further historical context for the decisions that Klaus and his family make...

List reasons that Zapruder gives as to why Klaus and his family made the decisions that they did:

Why is it important for us to pay attention to the historical context of diary entries?

Salvaged Pages: Klaus Langer

According to Klaus Langer in his interview with the Shoah Foundation, what were some additional details that he shared about his parents' attempts to emigrate to America and other countries?

In the second interview clip, Klaus describes an event that made a huge impression on him as a teenager...

What was the event that he is describing?

What does he remember about this event?

What two emotions did he remember feeling during that event?

In the third interview clip, Klaus describes what it was like saying goodbye to his parents...

In a few sentences, respond to Klaus' description of the goodbye scene with his parents. What stood out to you?

How has reading the diary and listening to Klaus and Zapruder impacted your view of the emigration process from Germany in the late 1930s?
