



A Boy's Story, A Man's Memory

Surviving the Holocaust: 1933 - 1945

Student Journal

For Oskar. The lessons of love, respect, and perseverance passed down from your parents to you will eternally ignite sparks of hope for generations to come and inspire us to be the best versions of ourselves. On behalf of the thousands of lives you have touched, including my own, thank you.

Hope Chest: Remembering the Holocaust

Written by Christine Harthun, residency & curriculum coordinator, Scottsdale Arts Learning & Innovation

Co-developed with educators Heidi Cocco and Patti Mastropolo

Based on *A Boy's Story, A Man's Memory: Surviving the Holocaust 1933-1945* by Oskar Knoblauch.

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Scottsdale Arts Learning & Innovation
7380 East Second St.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

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Section 1

Loyalty

Chapters 1-3

*Your Life is a Gift that is one of a kind.
Love, respect, and hope,
Always keep those three in mind!*

— Ruzia & Leopold Knoblauch



Oskar Knoblauch was a young student very much like you, going to school, playing sports with friends, and dreaming of the future. When the dark cloud of the Nazi regime gained control, his life along with the lives of millions of others were changed forever.

Reading

As you read through chapters 1–3, keep in mind the theme, “Loyalty.” Why do you think that loyalty was chosen as a theme? Provide examples from the text.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 1–3. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Militia (page 12): _____

Upheaval (page 28): _____

Anti-Semitism (page 19): _____

New Word _____ :

Questions: Chapter 1

1. Name three things Oskar mentions in the description of his childhood that may have helped to prepare him for what was to come during World War II.

2. Find examples of how Oskar helps the reader to imagine his childhood using the five senses. Write the sentence and the page number.

See: _____

Hear: _____

Smell: _____

Taste: _____

Touch: _____

3. How was Oskar's childhood similar to yours at this point in the story? Write at least three examples.

Questions: Chapter 2

4. List three examples from the text that demonstrates the spread of the Nazi Party's influence on the German people.

5. How do you think Oskar's parents were feeling about the rise of the Nazi Party? Cite evidence from the text.



From left: sister Ilse, Oskar, cousin Rose, and brother Siegmund. Leipzig, Germany 1930.

Questions: Chapter 3

6. Oskar and his family sought refuge by moving from Leipzig, Germany, to Kraków, Poland. Find Leipzig and Kraków on the map below. Draw a line connecting the two cities to trace Oskar's family's journey.

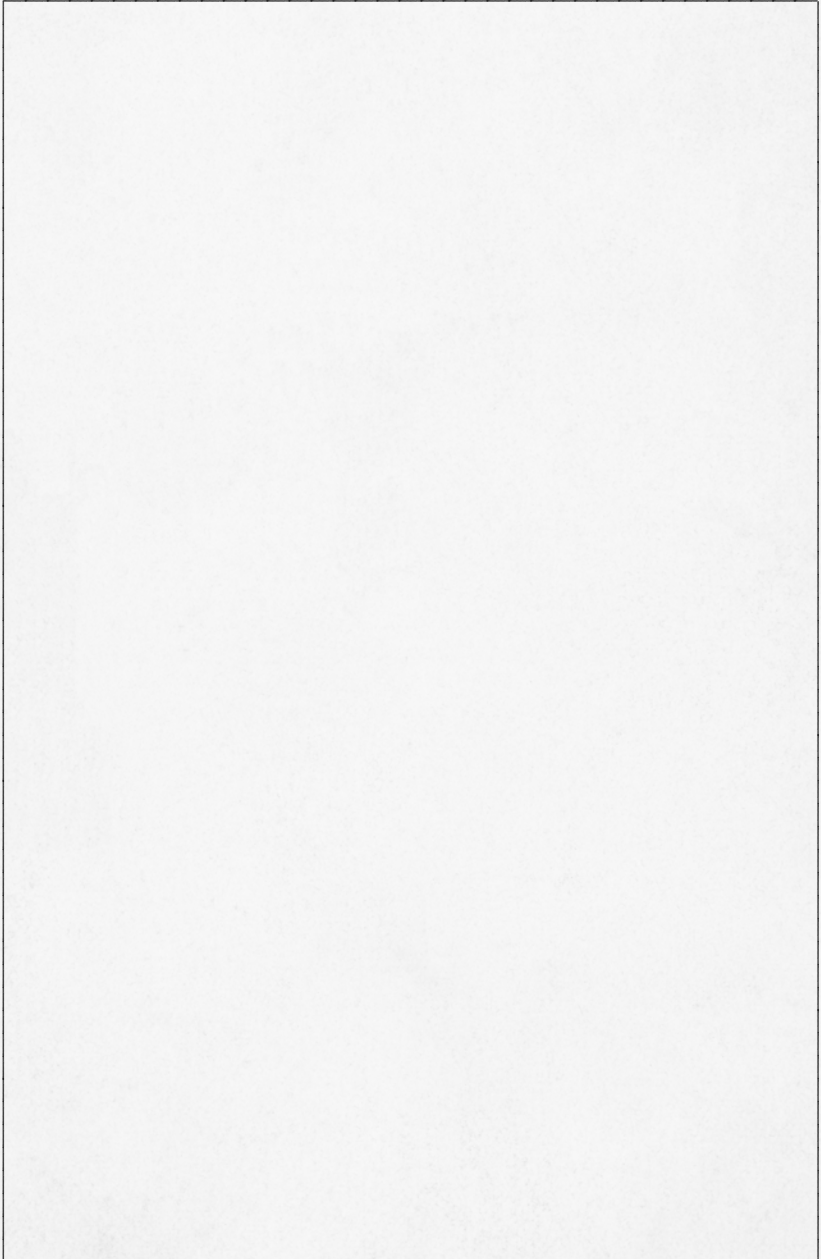


7. What was Oskar's perspective on his Jewish practice and how it differed from the two other Jewish boys in his class?

8. What is the significance behind Oskar sharing his friend Zbigniew's dreams about the future?

Critical Thinking Activity

At the end of Chapter 3, Oskar compares the landscape to a melody of Johann Strauss or Antonin Dvořák. While listening to the music clip(s), write or draw what the music makes you think about.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write or draw their response to the activity.

Section 2

Persevere

Chapters 4-6

*As long as we are together as a family,
that's all that matters!*

— Leopold Knoblauch



Jewish people from the Kraków Ghetto, who have been rounded up for deportation, are crowded onto the back of a truck in 1942. Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 4–6. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define another new word of your choice that you learned from this section.

Annexation (page 31): _____

Persevere (page 48): _____

Gestapo (page 44): _____

Arduous (page 58): _____

New Word _____ :

Questions: Chapter 4

1. According to Oskar, as the Nazi regime began to take over surrounding countries, why didn't Jewish people leave Europe?



The Knoblauch home in Kraków, Poland.

2. Oskar discusses the poem at the base of the Statue of Liberty titled *The New Colossus*, written by the Jewish American writer Emma Lazarus. One selection states:

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to be breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

From your reading, how was this poem relevant to 1939?
How does this poem's meaning pertain to today?



3. Oskar and his family again attempted to escape the Nazi regime by traveling to the Soviet Union. Using the map, draw a line from Kraków to the Soviet Union. Did the Knoblauch family make it to the Soviet Union?





View of the gate at the Kraków Ghetto, circa 1941.
 Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej.

Questions: Chapter 5

4. At the beginning of the chapter, Oskar describes the many ways in which life changed in Poland after Nazi occupation. On page 49, Oskar explains his reaction following a day of being badly mistreated.

My destination was home, and as I walked the very same streets that I walked so many times before in comfort and safety with my friend Zbigniew, I had the sensation that I was being watched and hated, but that day it didn't bother me. I had just passed a test of strength, endurance, and determination. This day, I thought to myself, I did not allow anyone to break my spirit or self-respect! This day was my victory! Tomorrow would be another day, another work detail, and hopefully a good day.

Describe your thoughts about this selection using one of the prompts below:

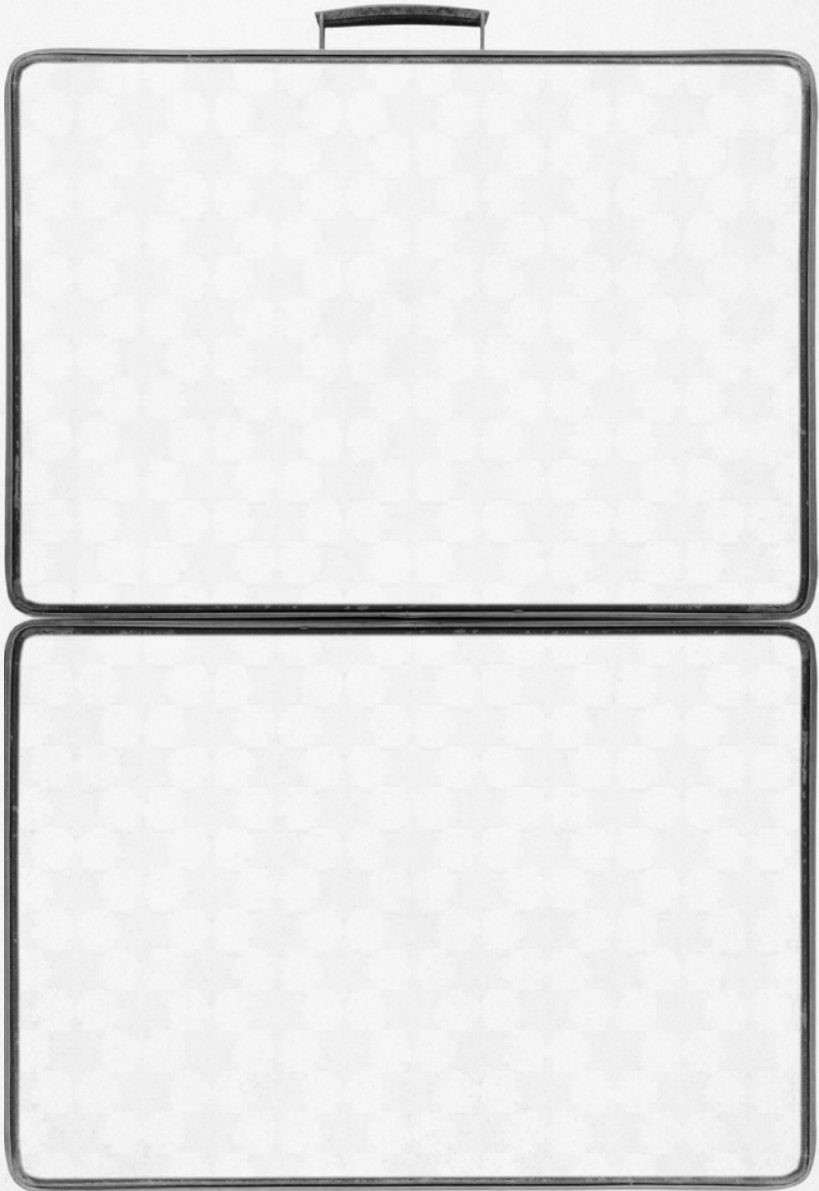
- This reminds me of...
- This is meaningful to me because...
- This makes me question...

Questions: Chapter 6

5. Oskar describes how Marina worked tirelessly to help his family. Oskar refers to people like Marina as “upstanders.” Based on the reading, what could “upstander” be interpreted to mean? Conversely, how would you define the word “bystander”?

Critical Thinking Activity

Oskar's family moved for their protection, leaving many belongings behind. Draw items that are important to you that you would bring in a small suitcase (18 × 13 × 7 inches) on a journey. List the objects and why you chose them.



Section 3

Choiceless Choices

Chapters 7–9

*We just don't have any choice.
We must hope and stay strong!*

— Szymek Schwimmer



Jewish people move their belongings into the Kraków ghetto in horse-drawn wagons.
Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 7–9. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Toiling (page 75): _____

Butte (page 70): _____

Trepidation (page 81): _____

Pragmatic (page 85): _____

New Word _____:

Questions: Chapter 9

5. On page 81, Oskar describes the ghetto in Podgorze and the sky above as **gray**. Describe how the color **gray** is also symbolic of Oskar and his family's life during that time.

6. The theme for chapters 7-9 is "Choiceless Choices." Explain what you think "choiceless choices" means. Describe one example of a situation in which Oskar and/or his family were forced to make a choiceless choice.



A German official supervises a deportation action in the Kraków Ghetto. Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Panstwowe w Krakowie.

Journal

Describe a time that you had to make a difficult choice. What factors did you have to weigh? Looking back on it now, does that choice tell you something about yourself and your priorities?

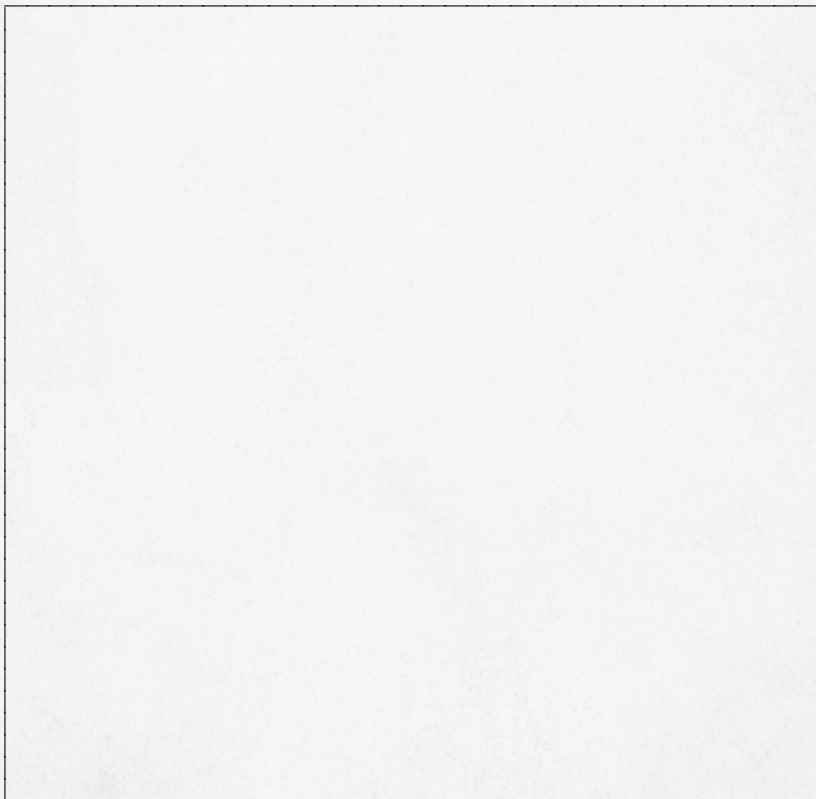
Critical Thinking Activity

On page 66 of Chapter 7, Oskar describes one of the workers on his sanitation team, Leon:

One of the workers on our team, Leon, was a tall man in his late 30s with an oversized tattered jacket and pants draped over his skinny body. His big eyes and nose protruded from his deflated cheeks. His face was covered with gray ashes and dirt from the garbage. His appearance gave no indication that he was an understudy at the Vienna Opera House before the war. When we were tired and frazzled, Leon would climb the wagon, and while standing on top of the garbage, he would pretend that this was his stage. Leon would do what he enjoyed best, and that was to sing!

His voice was a little weak, but it was a beautiful voice! Leon performed arias from Aida, Tosca, and Carmen, all sung in French or Italian. People passing by stopped to hear him. As he sang, more and more people would crowd around the wagon. Inspired by his beautiful voice and the familiar melodies, people listened in awe, some with tears in their eyes. Some people just stood there with their eyes closed, perhaps recalling better times: times of freedom and laughter, times of plenty, and times when we were a part of the human race. This unforgettable, withered figure brought beauty and some sunshine into our wilderness, even if it was only for a brief moment.

Leon sang opera to bring himself some joy and help lift the spirits of others in the ghetto. As you listen to “E Lucevan Le Stelle” from the Italian opera *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini, write or draw what the music makes you feel or think about. What do you think hearing this music meant to people living in the ghetto? Describe music that inspires you or cheers you up.



Section 4

Hold on to Hope

Chapters 10–12

*It is rather remarkable how a
little flicker of light from a candle can
brighten an otherwise dark room.*

— Oskar Knoblauch



A group of Jewish people chop up furniture to use as fuel in the Kraków Ghetto, circa 1941.
Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 10–12. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Dwelling (page 92): _____

Replenish (page 106): _____

Crematorium (page 106): _____

Ideology (page 100): _____

New Word _____ :



Kraków Ghetto, 1941.



Final area of the Kraków Ghetto, shortly before final liquidation, 1943.

Questions: Chapter 10

1. Oskar describes ways that Jewish people tried to escape from being rounded up for deportation to concentration camps. Oskar states that he believes his father may have chosen to stay in the ghetto because of the size of their family. Consider some of the options that Oskar describes, and put yourself in Oskar's father's place. Explain what you might do in Oskar's family's place.

2. On page 96, Oskar describes forced-labor sub-camps. Conditions at these camps were typically horrendous. One exception is the factory owned by Oskar Schindler. Write four to five sentences describing Oskar Schindler and what he is most known for doing. You may enter Oskar Schindler into an internet search for more information.



Oskar Schindler, post-1945. Photo: Courtesy of Yad Vashem.

Questions: Chapter 11

3. Why was it important for Oskar to include the war diary entry by Westermann, reservist lieutenant of the Schutzpolizei?

Questions: Chapter 12

4. *Checking the street down below, I had to shield my eyes from the piercing brightness of the sun's rays peeking over the rooftops across the street. Within minutes, I felt my upper body blanketed with the sun's calm and peaceful warmth. It was a soothing feeling, and for just a little while, the brutal reality of fright and peril was absorbed by the magic of the sun.*

Respond to the quote above using one of the prompts listed below.

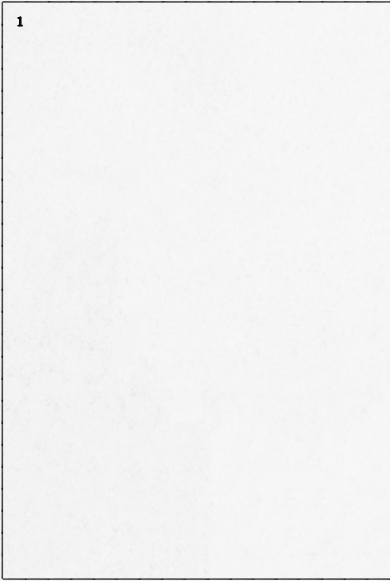
- I think this means...
- This makes me question...
- This reminds me of...

5. On page 109 of Chapter 12, Oskar describes one of the most terrifying events of his life.

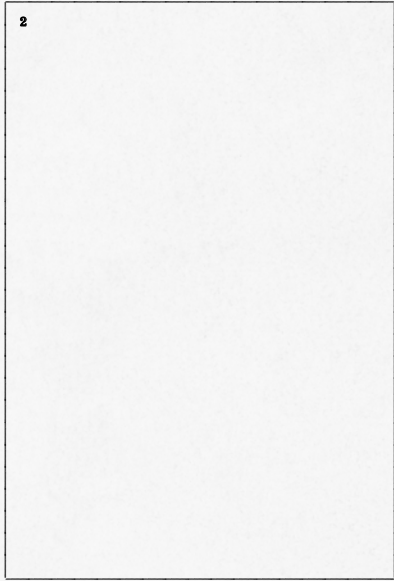
At the end of October of 1942, yet another aktion took place in the Kraków Ghetto. This time, it was on our street.

Chronologically storyboard and annotate the events of the aktion that took place on the street of Oskar's family's apartment.

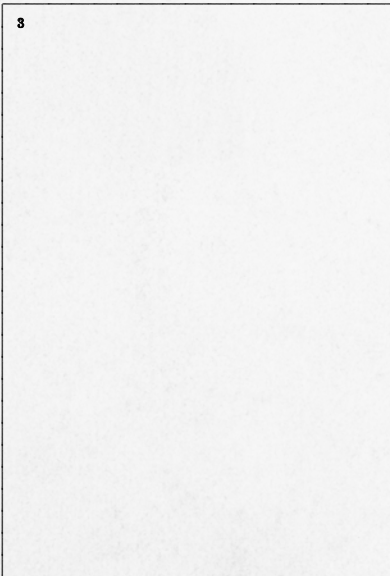
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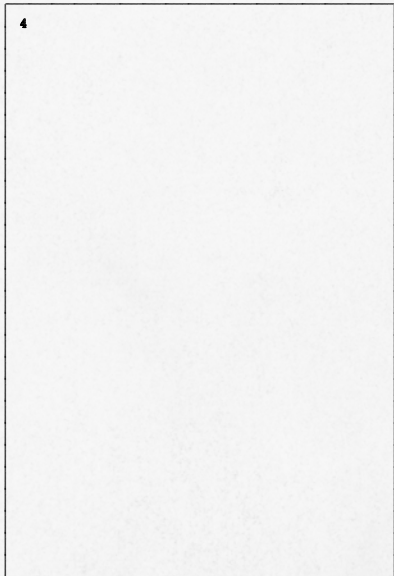
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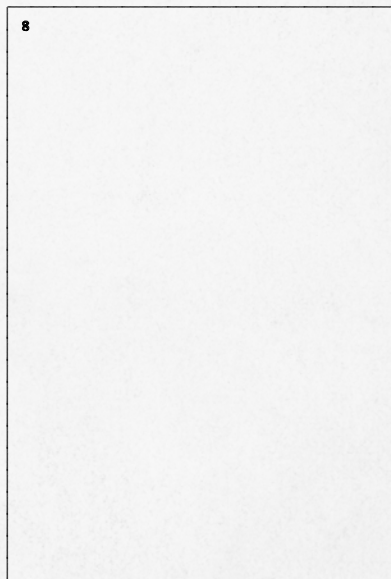
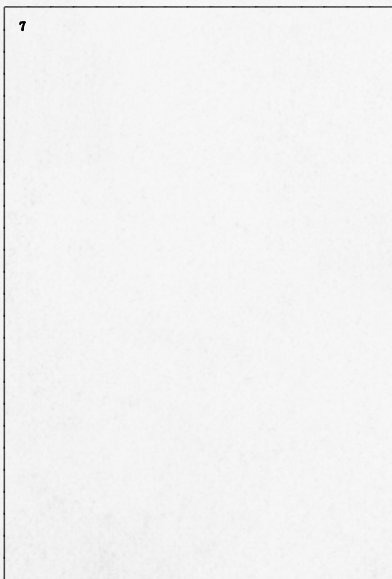
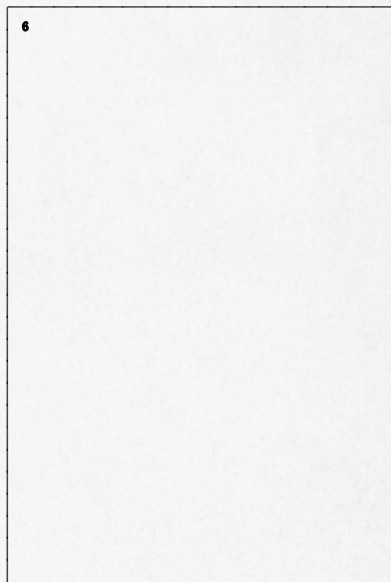
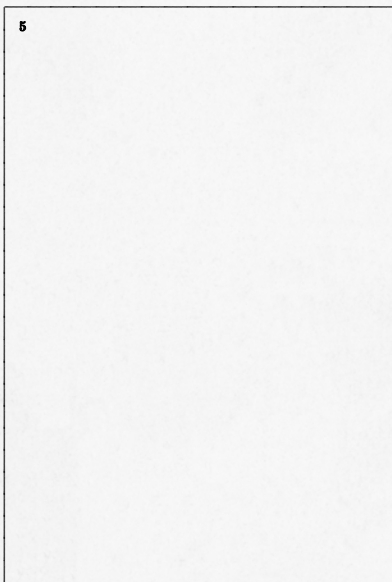


3



4





Critical Thinking Activity

Share with your group the storyboard that you made of Chapter 12. As a group, select one scene from your storyboards to create a tableau. Consider characters, setting, and dimension (high, medium, low, foreground, midground, and background).

Section 5

Stay Strong

Chapters 13–14

*There is a lot of truth in the saying,
"Time heals all wounds."*

— Oskar Knoblauch



SS guards oversee the liquidation of the Kraków Ghetto, March 1943.
Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 13 and 14. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Imminent (page 116): _____

Apathy (page 118): _____

Polarity (page 128): _____

Confiscate (page 133): _____

New Word _____ :

Mapping Kraków

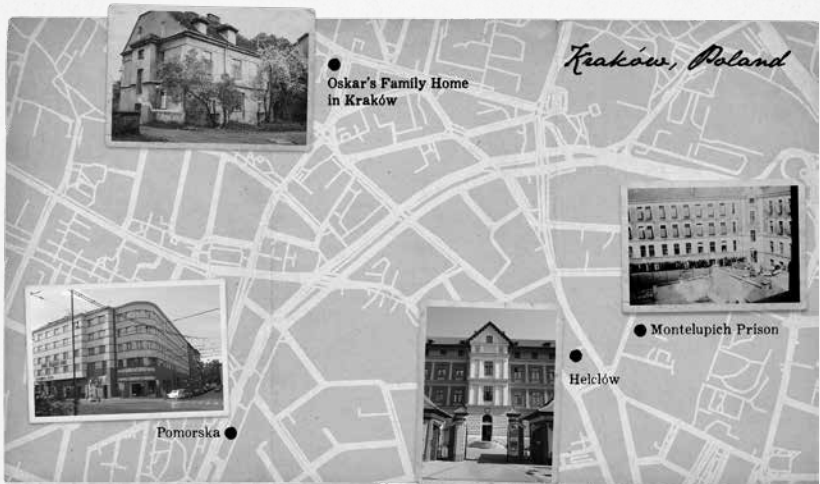
In Chapter 13, Oskar describes the uncertainty that came with the liquidation of the Kraków Ghetto. Many families were transported to death camps such as Sobibor, Belzek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. SS Officer Hans Fritche protected Oskar's family by securing them work at a Gestapo headquarters. First, Oskar and his brother were directed to report to a commandant for work assignment at a location that was a two-hour walk away. They were assigned new living quarters, located directly across the street, which Oskar and his brother helped to prepare for themselves and other Jewish people working at the Nazi headquarters.

Define the importance of each location listed below, as described by Oskar in Chapter 13; then find the locations on the map. Notice the proximity of each location to Oskar's family home.

Pomorska: _____

Montelupich Prison: _____

Helclów: _____



Locate Sobibor, Belzec, and Auschwitz-Birkenau death camps on the map below.



Questions: Chapter 13

1. What represented the small glimmer of hope for Oskar in Chapter 13 and why?

2. What event does Oskar attribute to his father becoming "a broken man"?

Questions: Chapter 14

3. When Oskar, his siblings, and friends would discuss where to go and what to do after the war, what was the one thing that they all agreed upon and why? In retrospect, how did Oskar's opinion change?



Armband required to be worn by all Jewish people in Poland during the Nazi occupation. Photo: Holocaust Education Center.

4. SS Officer Eckert is initially angry with Hans Fritsche for bringing Oskar to work at Pomorska. Give two examples of how Oskar was able to change Eckert's opinion of him.

Critical Thinking Activity

4. On page 128 of Chapter 14, Oskar describes how his feelings toward humanity changed over time following the Holocaust.

All of us, Ilse, Szymek, Bubek (my brother's nickname), and I agreed that we would remove ourselves from humanity as far as possible! At the time, the bitter indifference and hateful attitudes, the mistrust and negative polarities generated by friend and foe, was sufficient reason for our resolve. In retrospect, it all worked out differently. There is a lot of truth to the saying 'Time heals all wounds,' but time also forces us to change our attitudes and beliefs and to reestablish faith and trust in humans with whom we share the duties as temporary keepers of this planet called Earth.

Write a poem about a time in your life when your attitude about someone or something changed.

- What were your thoughts or feelings to start out?
- What happened to change the way you felt?

Your poem should include:

- Imagery by using descriptions based on the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch).
- Emotions and feelings.
- Creative word choice.
- At least six lines.

Section 6

News of Hope

Chapters 15–16

*The word "hope" all of a sudden
had a brand new meaning.*

— Oskar Knoblauch



Jewish women perform forced labor in the Plaszów labor camp (1943–44).
Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Leopold Page Photographic Collection.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 15 and 16. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Relics (page 137): _____

Manifestation (page 164): _____

Assimilated (page 168): _____

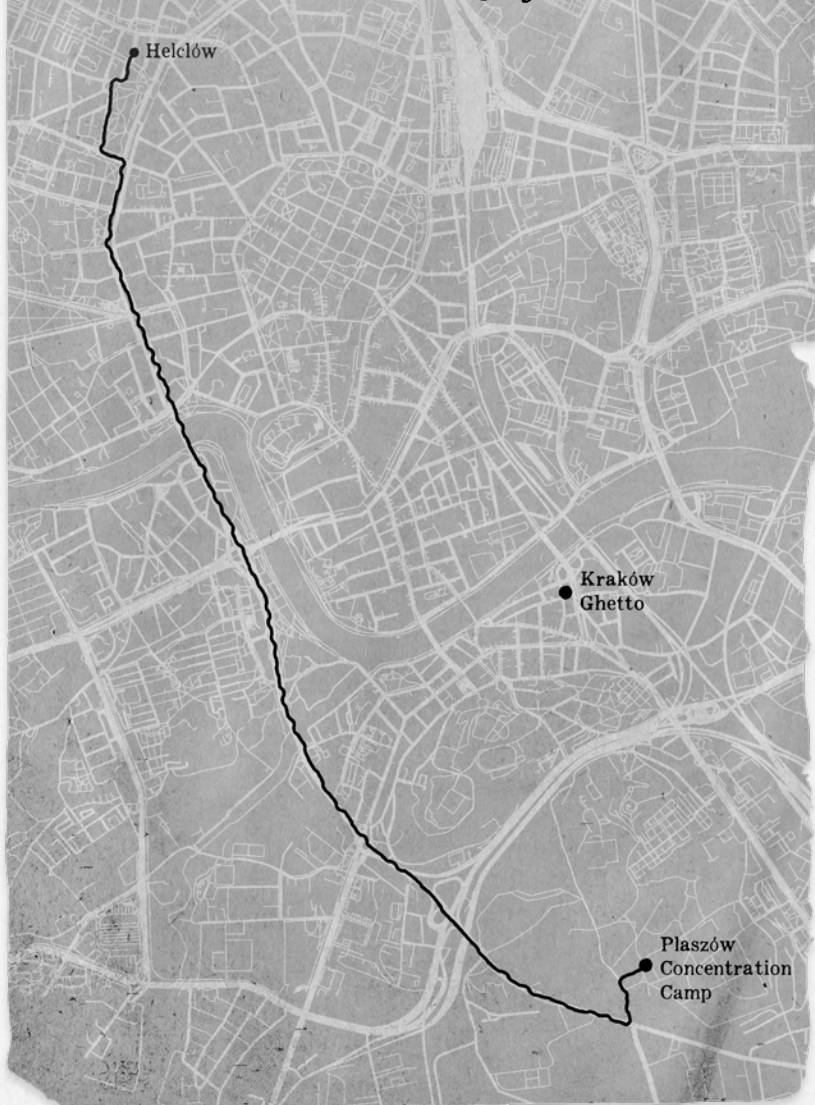
Bombardment (page 168): _____

New Word _____ :

Kraków, Poland:

Path from Helclów to Plaszów Concentration Camp

Three months after the ghetto's liquidation, Hans Fritsche, in a gesture of good will, took our family to visit our mom in Camp Plaszów. ... After a streetcar ride across town and a brisk 25-minute walk, we arrived at the camp's gate.



2. London is calling. Here is the news.

By modifying Mr. Eckstein's radio, Oskar was able to hear BBC broadcasts of the latest news happening around the world. On the timeline, list five historical events from Section 6 that Oskar may have heard while listening to the BBC. You may also use the Holocaust Chronology list in the back of the book (pages 276–277).



Questions: Chapter 16

3. *Then loud footsteps that sounded like thunder came in my direction, intermingled with the order addressed to me, "Knoblauch, step BACK!" Then the voice continued, "Gewirtz, get somebody else in his place!" And then, again, "Step back, Knoblauch!"*

Oskar credits Eckert with saving his life that day at Helclów during the selection of prisoners to be transported to Auschwitz; however, someone else had to take Oskar's place. This overwhelming moment is one that Oskar would think back on for the rest of his life.

Read through the list of emotions in the word bank of below. Select two that you believe Oskar felt in the moment he was told to step back into line, eliminating him from the Auschwitz transport. Explain why he may have experienced those emotions.

Confusion	Relief	Anger	Excitement
Elation	Horror	Sadness	Fear
Guilt	Disgust	Anxiety	Sympathy

4. Compare Eckert’s actions when he saved Oskar from transport to Auschwitz to when he publicly reprimanded and struck Oskar for taking food from Pomorska to Helclów. Was Eckert’s aggression toward Oskar out of character? Why or why not? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

5. Section 6 describes situations which made for a tumultuous time for Oskar and his family. While he was encouraged by news of the Allies’ advancements, Oskar knew that at any moment his time could be up.

Consider what you have read up to this point, and predict what you think will happen next. Support your opinions with evidence from the text.



Commandant Amon Goeth stands with his rifle on the balcony of his villa in the Plaszów concentration camp, 1943. Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Leopold Page Photographic Collection.

Journal

In Chapter 16, Oskar was faced with the difficult and dangerous decision of whether to take a gun from the backpack of a dead Nazi soldier. Why do you think that Oskar made the choice that he did?

Describe a time that you needed to make a choice and you felt uncertain about what was the right decision.



Women's work shoes, 1944.

Critical Thinking Activity

Oskar describes listening to the BBC play the first four bars of Beethoven's Symphony no. 5 for several minutes at the start of their broadcast. The notes were played on drums. Listen to the audio clip of this sound.

Since World War II, Beethoven's Symphony no. 5 has been referred to as the *Victory Symphony*. The rhythm of the opening phrase – "dit-dit-dit-dah" is Morse code for the letter "V." Also, the number five is represented by the character "V" in Roman numerals. The letter "V" stood for victory. The Allied forces found ironic satisfaction in using a German composer's music to bolster solidarity for the war effort.

While listening to the audio clip of Beethoven's Symphony no. 5, describe what the music makes you think about. How does it make you feel? What is the mood? Describe the imagery that you see in your mind. If *A Boy's Story*, *A Man's Memory* were to be made into a movie, what scene would this song best accompany?

Section 7

Blueprint for Escape

Chapters 17 – 19

*Perhaps one day people will see that good will
always triumph over evil.*

— Oskar Knoblauch



Landing Craft delivering troops to Omaha Beach during D-Day, World War II, 1944. Photo: GoodFreePhotos.com.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 17–19. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Remorse (page 177): _____

Pyres (page 179): _____

Somber (page 191): _____

Pogrom (page 187): _____

New Word _____:

Questions: Chapter 17

1. After the disappearance of their father, Leopold, Oskar and his siblings had to make a choice about what to do next. Using evidence from the text, explain how the siblings decided to move forward. What was the motivation behind their decision?



Leopold Knoblauch, Oskar's father,
Kraków, Poland, 1937.

2. What were the consequences of Siegmund and Pilzmacher taking cheese from the Gestapo's supply shipment? What could have happened if not for Oskar's quick thinking when speaking to Herr Eckert?

Questions: Chapter 18

3. Given what you know about Eckert and Fritsche, do you think that either person was sincere in their plans for Oskar and his family after the war? Support your answer with evidence from the text.



The Red Army enters the provincial capital of Wilno during the invasion of Poland in 1939. Photo: GoodFreePhotos.com

Questions: Chapter 19

4. Chapter 19 was written by Oskar's cousin Rose, who spent most of the Holocaust at Camp Plaszow and then between Birkenau, Auschwitz, and Ravensbruck.

Review Rose's account of her experiences during the war and after liberation, and respond to the following prompts.

- List two pieces of information that you learned about events during the war and after liberation.
- List two questions that Rose's account makes you wonder.



Oskar's cousin Rose at the entrance to Birkenau death camp, Poland, May 7, 1995.

Journal

Then it was New Year's Eve, December 31, 1944. For the previous five years, the ringing in of a New Year had no significant meaning to us. It simply represented just another year of suffering and hardship and possible death. But midnight, listening to London's BBC, was different. We heard the countdown of seconds, and then the traditional singing of "Auld Lang Syne"—the Scotch phrase expressing days of happiness long since passed. It was followed with big band music that had the feel and sound of optimism, freedom, and life! I was 19 years old that night. My wish for the New Year was to witness the end of that terrible war, and to see the end to human suffering and persecution all over the world! I witnessed the end of World War II, but as for my other wish to see the end of human sufferings and persecutions all over the world—well, I think that will take perhaps another few hundred years until we creatures will learn to use our brains in their full capacity rather than just a tiny part of them!

The world is shaped by the collective decisions of each individual. Each day brings the opportunity for a new beginning. Write no less than five to eight sentences about what you will do starting today to improve the world. Change can begin in your own home, neighborhood, school, or community.

Critical Thinking Activity

Photo Analysis: Historical photos can be a useful primary source. Study the image in front of you. Look for clues that indicate what has been documented. Answer the prompts below to help you analyze the image.

What is the focal point? _____

What is in the background? _____

What is the setting? _____

List the people in the image. _____

What type of clothing is worn? _____

What objects are held or worn? _____

Describe facial expressions. _____

Describe the gestures of those pictured. _____

Infer...

Describe what you see in the picture. Predict what could have happened after this picture was taken. What clues do you see that give you that impression?

Explain why this picture might have been taken. Use evidence to support your answer.

What does this picture make you wonder?
Write at least three questions.

If the people in this photo were still alive today, what question(s) would you like to ask them?

Section 8
Liberation

Chapters 20 – 21

*We all agreed that the tears we shed were tears
of sadness and tears of happiness.*

— Oskar Knoblach



A Jewish family climbs the stairs to the train platform at a railway station during a deportation action from the Kraków Ghetto.
Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Dokumentacji Mechanicznej.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 20–21. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

Liberation (page 199): _____

Impending (page 201): _____

Ironic (page 201): _____

Astray (page 202): _____

Dormant (page 208): _____

New Word _____ :

Questions: Chapter 20

1. Explain the significance of Kurt Schondorf sending word to Ilse that he was ready to pick up the sweater she made.

2. Who did Tadek say lived in the apartment building, and why was it not safe to remain in the Schondorf's apartment?



3. Compare and contrast the thoughts of Oskar, his brother, and his sister as they waited in the vacant Schondorf apartment to those of the apartment building dwellers as they took refuge in the basement.

Questions: Chapter 21

4. In Chapter 21, after confronting the women of the UL Krasinskiego 47 apartment building, Oskar reflects upon the fears and adversities he dealt with for six years. Cite evidence from the text to explain at least five examples of what fueled Oskar's emotions (pages 208–209).

5. After liberation, the Polish government instituted a draft into the “new” Polish army (also known as the First Polish Army and Berling’s Army).

A. How did Oskar feel about being drafted into the military, and why did he hold this opinion?

B. In your opinion, should people sacrifice freedom in the interest of security? Consider the benefits and disadvantages.



Gestapo Headquarters subcamp Pomorska, where Oskar, Ilse, Siegmund, and Leopold worked for the German security police from March 1943 until January 1945, in Kraków, Poland. Photo: Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch, circa 1995.



Door used by Oskar, Ilse, and Siegmund to escape the Gestapo complex on January 17, 1945, in Kraków, Poland. Photo: Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch, circa 1995.

Journal

From the looks of it, our lives would have to be started all over again for the third time. We began our first life at birth, our second life the day the Germans occupied Poland, and this was the third. In all probability, it wasn't going to be our last time.

After liberation, Oskar and his family continued to face a tremendous amount of uncertainty. They had no money or home, and they did not know where to find their family or if their family even survived.

Think about a time that you felt like you had to start your life over. Examples might include starting at a new school, moving to a new house (maybe in a new city), or a life event that caused a shift in your home life. What have you learned as a result of starting over? Did something positive or surprising come from that situation? What advice would you give to a friend going through a similar situation?



Critical Thinking Activity

Oskar lists some of the musical artists who were played at Ilse (Oskar's sister) and Elek's wedding in 1945. Artists who were popular at the time included Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong, Judy Garland, and the bands of Benny Goodman, Harry James, and Tommy Dorsey.

After listening to songs by these artists, make comparisons between the music you just heard and music that you might hear at a wedding today.

Work with a partner to answer the following questions.

Why do you think this style of music was popular during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s?

What does this music make you think about?

**Do you think these songs might be played at a wedding today?
Why or why not?**

Do you like this music? Why or why not?

**Finally, create a playlist of songs that you might recommend to
Ilse and Elek if their wedding were to take place today. List at
least four songs.**

Section 9

Restoration

Chapters 22 – 23

*Our experience showed us that if people just
take some time and put aside their
religious, ethnic, or racial differences, this world
would be a much better place to live in!*

— Oskar Knoiblauch



Community rebuilds post-war Leipzig, Germany. Photo: Deutsche Fotothek.

Vocabulary

Define the following words found in chapters 22–23. Definitions can be interpreted from the text or from a dictionary. Also, list and define one other new word that you learned from this section.

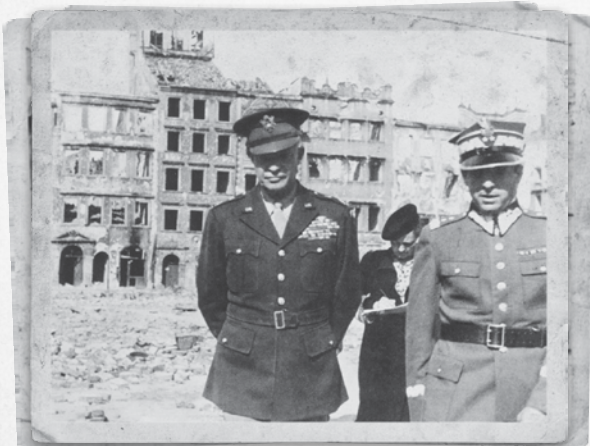
Clandestine (page 217): _____

Mandate (page 218): _____

Monotonous (page 221): _____

Bureaucratic (page 232): _____

New Word _____:



General Dwight Eisenhower during his visit in Warsaw, 1945. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

The Knoblauch Family's Journey

After liberation, many Holocaust survivors found themselves without homes to return to. Over the years, new families occupied residencies of those removed by the Nazis.

Review the descriptions below of Oskar's family's journey after the Holocaust indicated on the map below.



- Oskar and Szymek left **Kraków** for jobs in **Katowice**. One week later, Ruzia, Rose, and Symcha followed. Ilse, who was pregnant, and her husband, Elek, headed for Palestine but were detained in Italy.
- When Poland initiated a draft, Oskar, Szymek, and the family attempted to emigrate to **Palestine**. Their journey began by train to **Prague** to a displaced persons camp in **Plzen**, Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia).
- Unfortunately, the British government pressured the U.S. government to close the camp and resettle inhabitants. With the help of an American soldier, Oskar and the family were able to escape the train destined for Poland. The family boarded another train for **Regensburg, Germany**.
- After spending several days in a **Regensburg** refugee center, Oskar and the family transferred to Camp Feldafing, a permanent displaced persons camp in **Feldafing, Germany**.
- Oskar's family received word that Ilse and Elek were detained in Florence, Italy. Oskar's mother asked Oskar and Szymek to travel to Florence to convince Ilse and Elek to return with them. The two began their 600-mile journey by hopping a train to **Mittenwald, Germany**.

- Passing through **Innsbruck, Austria**, the train labored its way through the **Alps** to **Brenner Pass**, which bridges the border between Austria and Italy.
- The train stopped in **Bolzano, Italy**, where the two made their way through nearby grape fields.
- A farmer helped them to hitch a ride with a trucker, who was on his way to **Verona**. They spent the night in a 12th century monastery.
- The next morning, a kind monk was able to negotiate train tickets for them to **Florence**. A trolley delivered Oskar and Szymek to the street where his sister and brother-in-law were living. Ilse was in her seventh month of pregnancy with twins and unable to make the trip back with them. After spending a week with his sister, Oskar and Szymek made the long trek back to Camp Feldafig.

On the map below, trace a purple line over where they started in **Kraków** to the city where the family relocated to a permanent displaced persons camp. Trace a green line over the journey that Oskar and Szymek took to reach Ilse in **Florence**.



Questions: Chapter 22

1. Does Oskar's description of immigration without papers in 1945 sound like an experience that could happen today? How might it be similar? How might it be different?

2. What helped to restore Oskar's faith in humankind?

Critical Thinking Activity

Using the information provided and Oskar's narrative, write the number of each historic monument in the corresponding location on the map.



1. Tyn Church, Prague, Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia)



2. Great Synagogue, Plzen, Czech Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia)



3. Regensburg, Germany



4. Fedafing Displaced Persons Camp, Feldafing, Germany



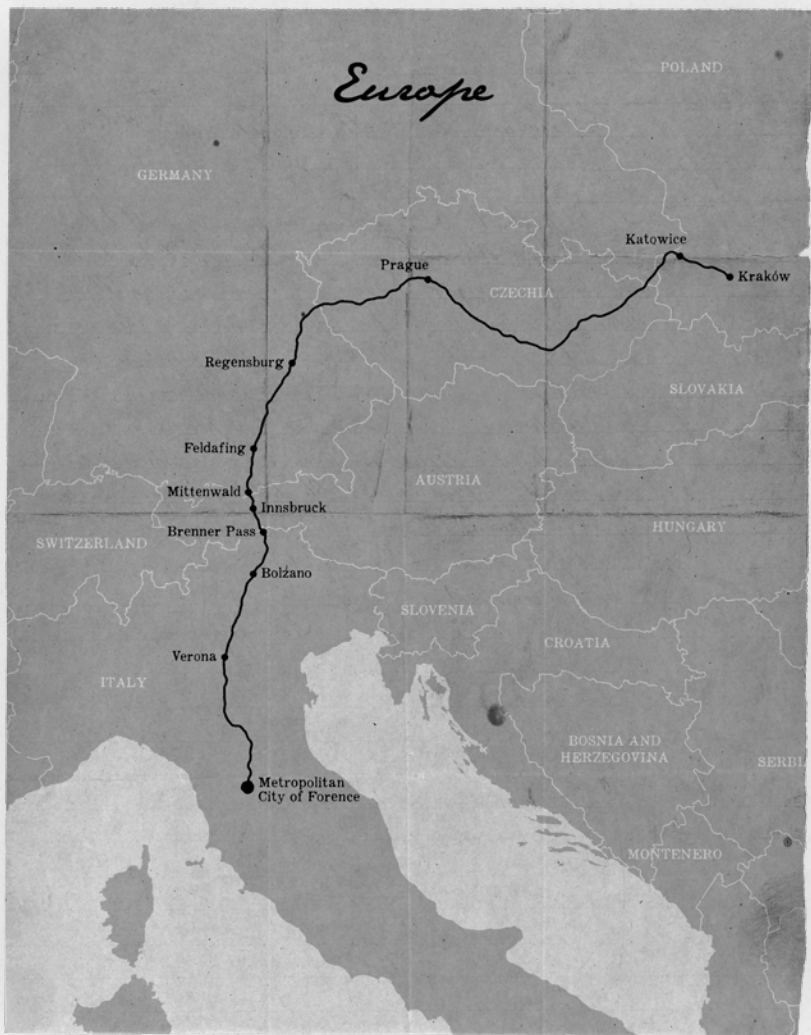
5. Innsbruck, Austria, buildings with the Alps in the background.



6. Brenner Pass, Austrian/Italian border



7. The Alps, Austria

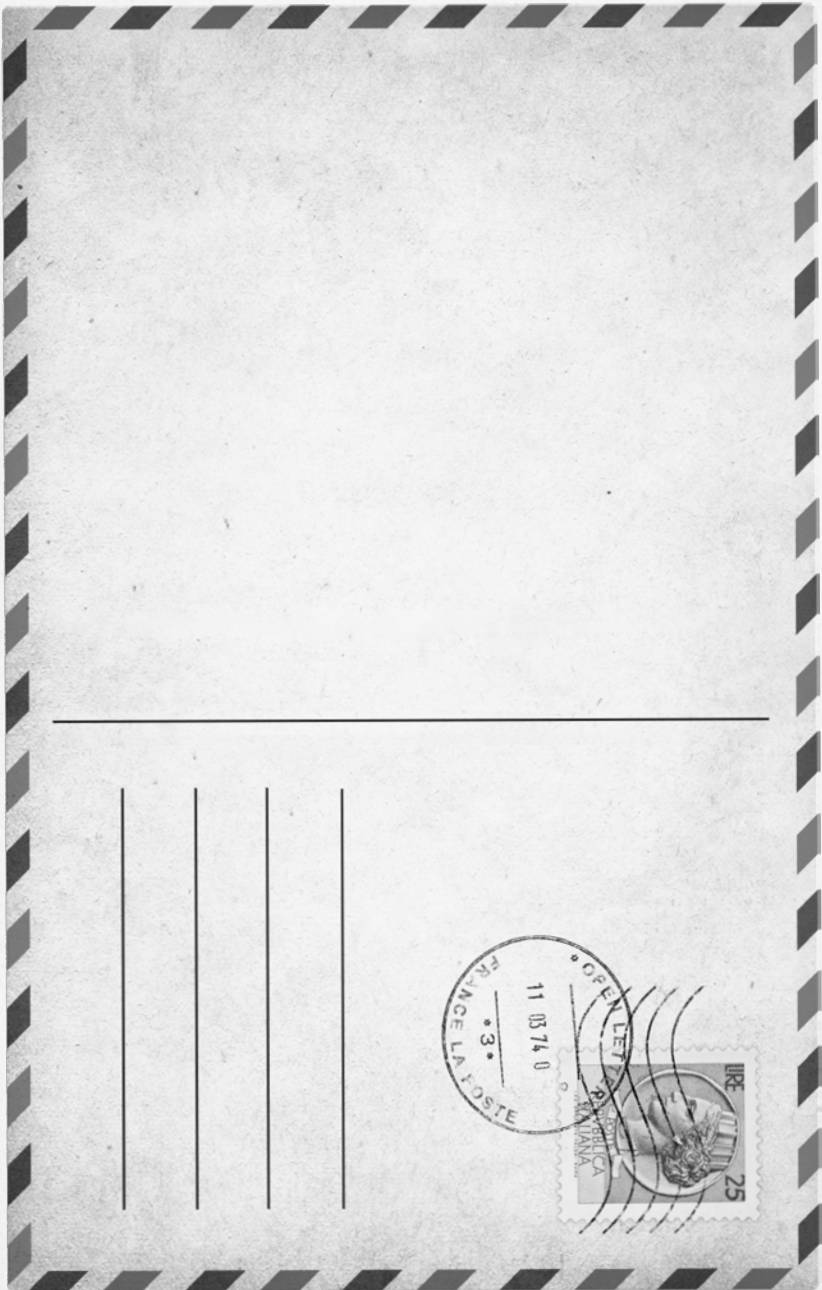


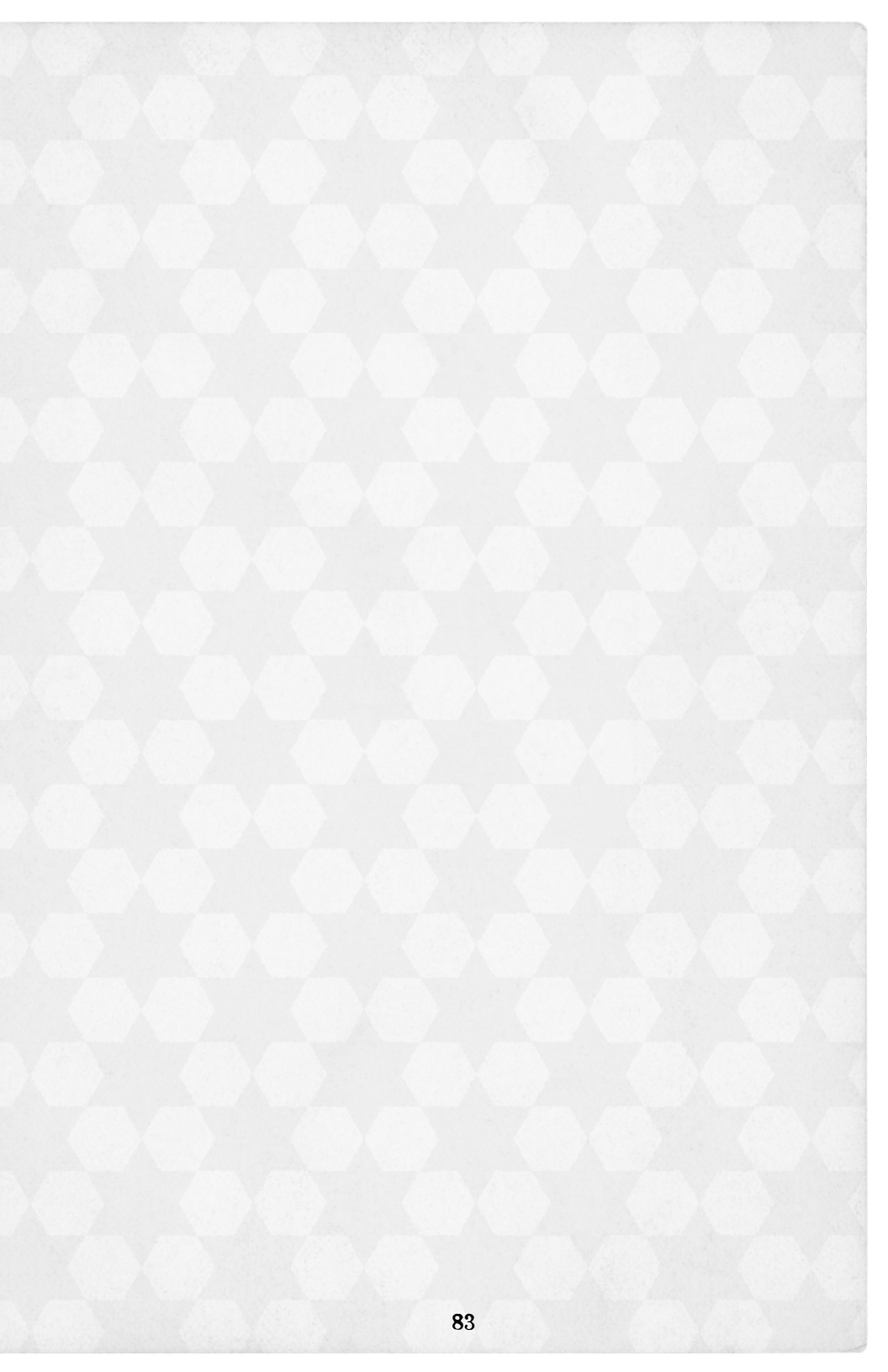
8. Bolzano, Italy



9. Verona, Italy

Using the information provided and Oskar's narrative, write a postcard to a family member describing your experiences and what you have seen on your journey from Kraków, Poland, to Florence, Italy.





Section 10

Renewal

Chapter 24

*Life is an extraordinary gift to mankind,
yet the path life carves out for
each of us is mysterious and puzzling.*

— Oskar Knohlauch



Polish prisoners in Dachau toast their liberation from the camp. Photo: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

Image Sources

Cover: *Oskar Knoblauch, age seven.* 1932. Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch.

Section 1: Loyalty

- *The Knoblauch Family.* 1932. Leipzig, Germany. Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch.
- *Ise, Oskar, cousin Rose, and Siegmund.* 1930. Leipzig Germany. Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch.

Section 2: Persevere

- *Jews from the Kraków ghetto, who have been rounded-up for deportation, crowded onto the back of a truck.* 1942. Photograph Number: 55138. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Panstwowe w Krakowie (Public Domain). <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa6426>.
- *The Knoblauch pre-war family home.* 1995. Kraków, Poland. Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch.
- *View of the gate at the Krakow ghetto.* Circa 1941. Photograph Number: 73170. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa20692>.

Section 3: Choiceless Choices

- *Jews move their belongings into the Krakow ghetto in horse-drawn wagons.* Circa 1940. Photograph Number: 14692. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Panstwowe w Krakowie (Public Domain). <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1064763>.
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- *A German official supervises a deportation action in the Krakow ghetto. Jews, assembled in a courtyard with their bundles, await further instructions.* Circa 1942. Photograph Number: 50347. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Panstwowe w Krakowie (Public Domain). <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa654>.

Section 4: Hold on to Hope

- *A group of Jews chop up furniture to use as fuel in the Krakow ghetto.* Circa 1941. Photograph Number: 14713. YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Archiwum Panstwowe w Krakowie (Public Domain) <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1054821>.
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Section 5: Stay Strong

- *A column of Jews march with bundles down a main street in Krakow during the liquidation of the ghetto. SS guards oversee the deportation action.* 1943. Photograph Number: 06694. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1037034>.
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- *Commandant Amon Goeth stands with his rifle on the balcony of his villa in the Plaszow concentration camp.* 1943–44. Photograph Number: 05276. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Leopold Page Photographic Collection. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa31497>.

Section 7: Blueprint for Escape

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- *Oskar's cousin Rose at the entrance to Birkenau death camp. 1995.* Poland.

Section 8: Liberation

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Section 9: Restoration

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- *Oskar Knoblauch's immigration papers to Canada. 1949.* Courtesy of Oskar Knoblauch.
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