

# Holocaust Memorial Day

**The 27th January each year is Holocaust Memorial Day.**

**On this day we remember the millions of people who were murdered in the Holocaust, the victims of Nazi persecution, and in the genocides that followed, in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.**

**We learn about the past so that we can take**

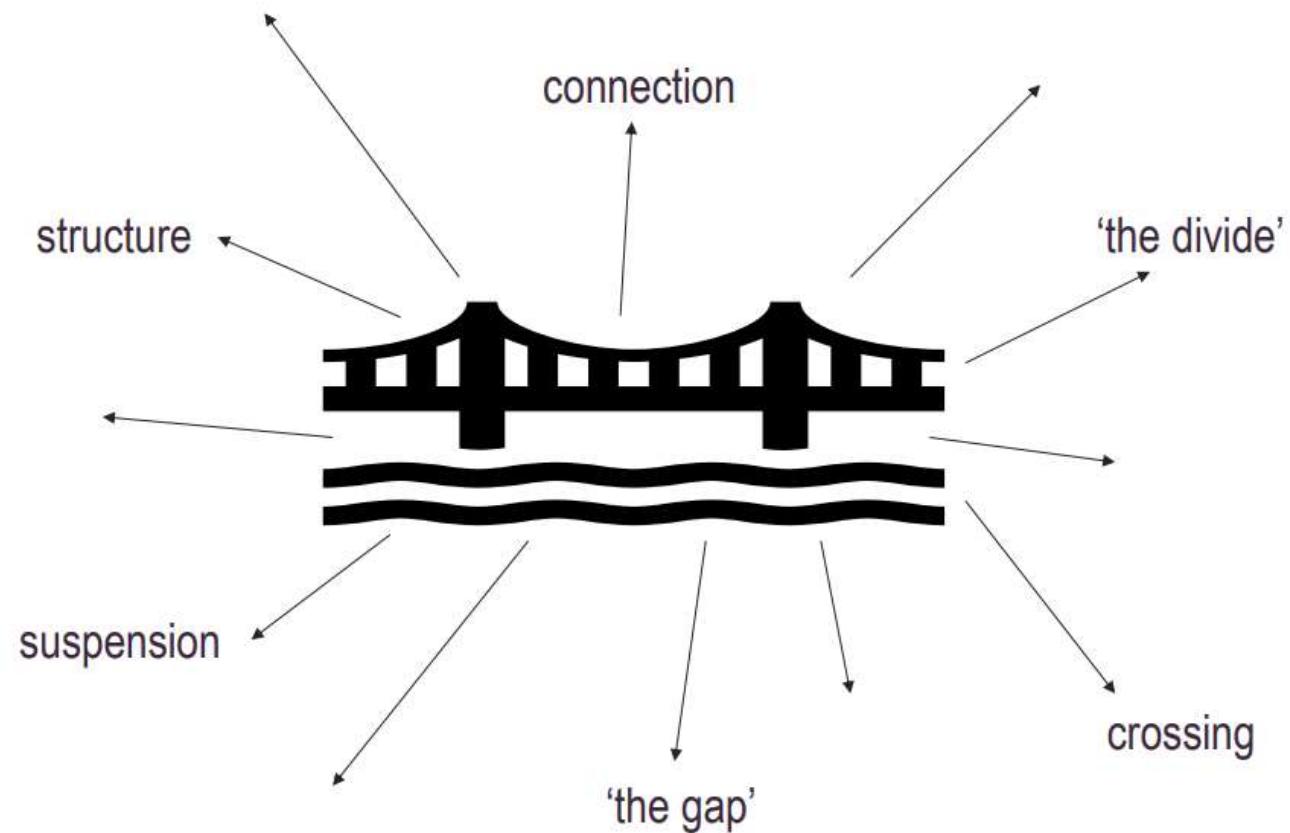


The Holocaust is a reminder that genocide must still be resisted every day. Our world often feels fragile and vulnerable, and we cannot be complacent. Even in the UK, prejudice and the language of hatred must be challenged by us all.

# Holocaust Memorial Day 2026

- On 27th January, we mark the 81st anniversary of the day in 1945, that Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp, is occupied in Poland, was liberated.
- More than 1 million Jewish men, women and children were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and more in other camps and locations, in a crime known as The Holocaust.
- 6 million Jewish people across Europe were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators, including 90% of all Europe's Jewish children (around 1.5 million).
- Millions of non-Jewish people were also targeted by the Nazis and their collaborators during this time.
- The 2026 theme for HMD is 'Bridging Generations'

What is a bridge? What words do you think of when a bridge is mentioned?



# What is a bridge?



- Noun: 1. A structure carrying a road, path, railway, etc. across a river, road, or other obstacle. “a bridge across the River Thames”
- Verb: Be or make a bridge over (something), “a covered walkway bridged the gardens”

# What is a bridge?



- A bridge connects two places. It can also connect two people, two generations, or two moments in time.
- What might a bridge carry?
- In our TFCHA we are going to consider one story as a bridge, and with it a question or perhaps a series of questions.

A bridge begins with a question or questions



Photo of Leon Greenman and family, Jewish Museum London.

Look  
closely at  
this photo.  
What do you  
see?  
What do you  
think?  
What do  
you wonder?

# Feedback from students

See	Think	Wonder
A family  Helping - looks like a mum helping their child?	Looks like a family moment  Maybe a special occasion	Is the toddler learning to walk or is there something more going on?  What's the child holding?  Who are they?

# What story might this photo carry to us?



This is Leon Greenman, he was born in London.

He is pictured with his wife Else, who he married in 1935 and their son Barney.

This Jewish family lived in Rotterdam, in the Netherlands.

Their story is a

# Bridging from Photo to Story

- Leon recalled the arrest...

'I tried in vain to protest to one of the men....but he would not listen...Frustrated and frightened I looked around the room and saw my wife's grandmother a woman of 83, trying to reason with one of the officers, ...My wife was standing there as well, tears streaming down her cheeks as she told me to do as they say ...and I turned to see Barney, standing up in his cot, ...shaking the sides - trying to get our attention.

# Bridging from Photo to Story

- Leon later recalled how powerless he felt in that moment...

'The inevitable moment had come for us just as it has for our friends and acquaintances. We had now become just one more forsaken family...In a matter of minutes, life had become a nightmare, unnatural, and surreal.

- The Greenman' suddenly felt very scared and uncertain about what lay ahead...they were taken from Rotterdam to Westerbork

# A real bridge - 'Spoorbrug near Gouda'



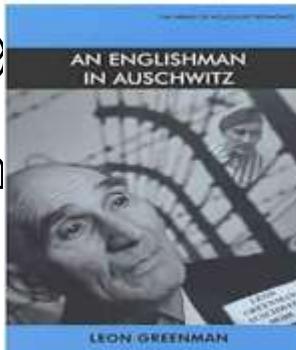
The Second railway bridge over the Gouwe River (1920).  
Photo collection: Regional Archives Midden-Holland

This bridge was part of the train route from Rotterdam to Westerbork.

Thousands of people crossed it - some, not by choice.  
What might this bridge have carried?

# From someone to somewhere

- Leon was born in London in 1910.
- He married Else in 1935 and in 1940 their son Barney was born.
- In October 1942 the Greenman's were deported from Rotterdam.
- They remained in Westerbork for about four months, before being deported to Auschwitz in January 1943.
- When the war ended in 1945, the Greenman's changed between 10 and 15 times before settling in the Netherlands.



Questions can be a bridge to the past, the present and future.

What one question would you like to ask, what would you want to know about the Greenman family?



# Bridging from Photo to Story

- Leon recalled the deportation from Westerbork to Auschwitz...



Photo of Leon Greenman and family. Jewish Museum London.

'We had been told that we were being sent to Poland to work for the Germans...we thought we would get through it and start our lives anew after the war. We could only hope that the war would end soon"

# Bridging from Photo to Story

Leon described the train journey...



Photo of Leon Greenman and family, Jewish Museum London.

'During the trip, Else and I spoke of many things. We agreed that, if only one of us survived, the other would not marry again unless we found someone who would be a good step-parent for Barney. Someone who would be kind to him. We talked and talked during the 36-hour trip to Poland...we had nothing to drink or eat... We slept a little, taking turns so that one of us was always awake to hold Barney. We were tired, hungry, miserable and utterly hopeless, moving to destination unknown. All that we had worked for - our business, our home and all our experiences, both good and bad, that made what we called our lives - had been taken from us because we had been born Jewish.'

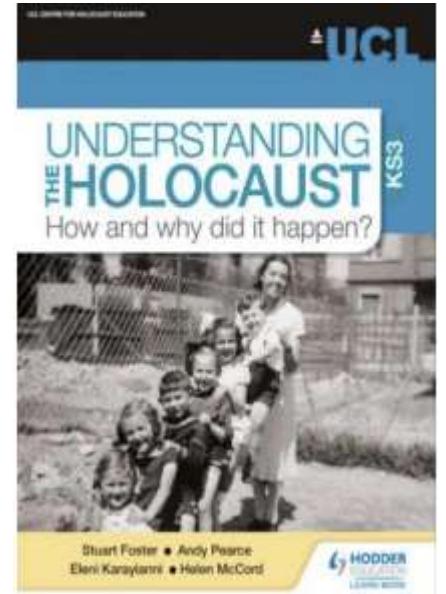
# A bridge begins with a question or questions



Settela Steinbach, a girl from the Netherlands, transported from Westerbork to extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, in 1944. From film "Westerbork 1944" by Rudolf Breslauer. Still at 8:24 min.

Look closely at this photo.  
What do you see? What do you *think*? What do you *wonder*?

# Bridges to victims of Nazi Persecution



- Whilst this HMD2026 we have focused on the experience of Jews and the example of the Greenman family, to encourage thinking and reflection about how ordinary Jewish people, families, businesses and communities were discriminated against, persecuted, and later murdered during the Holocaust, it is important to recognise that the Nazis targeted a variety of groups and communities, such as Sinti, like Settela.
- This HMD2026 you may want to consider who the Nazis identified as 'enemies. Why were groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, disabled people,

# Voices and a bridge across time

REVENGE does not bring back the dead.  
does not take away the suffering,  
it simply perpetuates the violence

It is difficult to get conviction & rections,  
the question is "not to let it happen again!"

I have tried to rebuild my life,  
a new life, ???

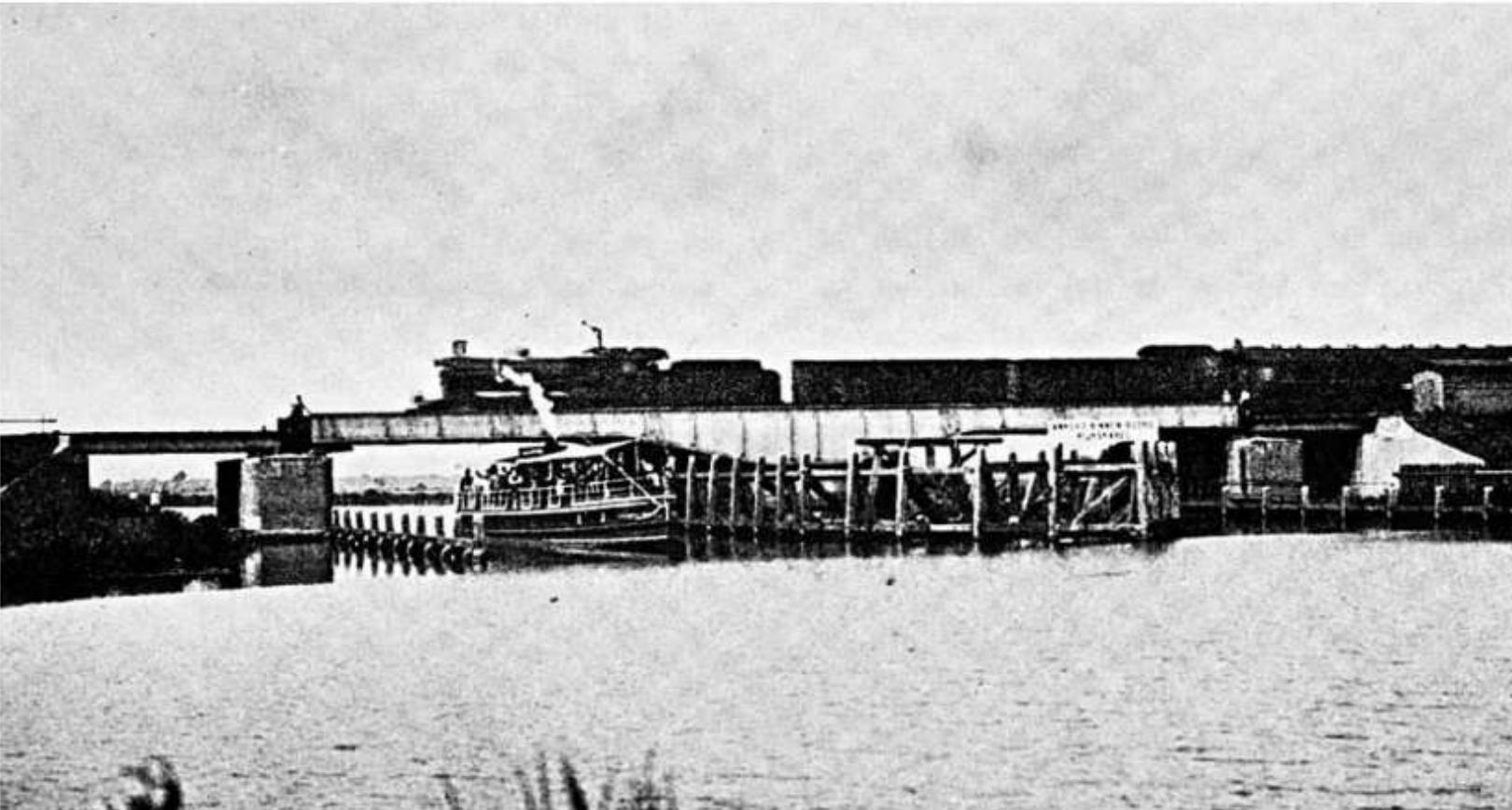
I have no children, no grandchildren to cuddle.

Have I succeeded,? I don't know,  
begin to busy with this work,  
seems to be my mission.??



Photo of Leon Greenman and family, Jewish Museum London., Settela Steinbach, a girl from the Netherlands, transported from Westerbork to extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, in 1944. From film "Westerbork 1944" by Rudolf Breslauer. Still at 8:24 min.

# What a bridge carries



The Second railway bridge over the Gouwe River (1920).  
Photo collection: Regional Archives Midden-Holland

Remember this bridge was part of the train route from Rotterdam to Westerbork. Both Leon and Settela's families were among those who crossed it. It is a silent witness to what happened, but perhaps it's a bridge across the

# Extending our thinking this HMD2026

- What bridges do you walk across every day
  - seen or unseen?
- Can you think of a time when a bridge was more than just a structure?
- What bridges were broken during the Holocaust? What might it mean to rebuild them?
- If you could build a bridge to someone from another generation, what would it be made of?