

## How to make a film on “Our Town’s Jewish History”. A Centropa guide.

**Step 1.** Students need to begin by doing their research, so they know the following:

- a. When did Jews first come to our city?
- b. How many synagogues were there at the peak of the Jewish population?
- c. What was the peak Jewish population and when was that?
- d. Who were the most famous Jews who came from here?
- e. How many Jews live here now and which Jewish sites are here now?
- f. What were the occupations of the Jewish people in our town?
- g. What happened here during the Holocaust?
- h. What happened to the Jews of our town after the Holocaust?
- i. Describe the Jewish community today and its activities.

**Note on sources:** We know that students will refer to the internet for their facts. That is not a problem, so long as the students *cite specific, reputable sources* for their information. We must leave this decision to the teachers’ discretion, as they vary from language to language. Obviously, Yad Vashem, the US Holocaust Museum, the Virtual Jewish Library are all acceptable resources and there are others in each country.

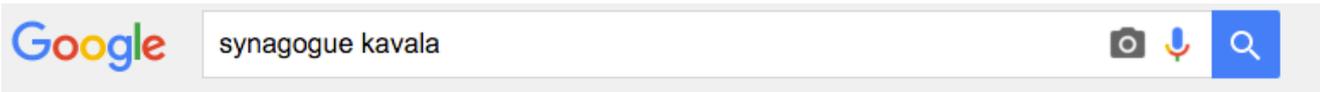
When it comes to listing Jewish population figures and dates and numbers regarding the Holocaust, students should be told to provide at least *two sources for every fact*, just to be sure. Remember: these stories will be seen by experts around the world.

### Step 2: Locating good photos to tell the story with.



Where to get good photos: Aside from websites, national and city libraries and archives will have photos about Jewish history or places. So will local Jewish museums. Remember, if you search in Google and type in the name of a town + Jewish, you may get lots of photos. Choose high resolution photos, at least 1084 x 824—otherwise, they will look pixelated on your video.

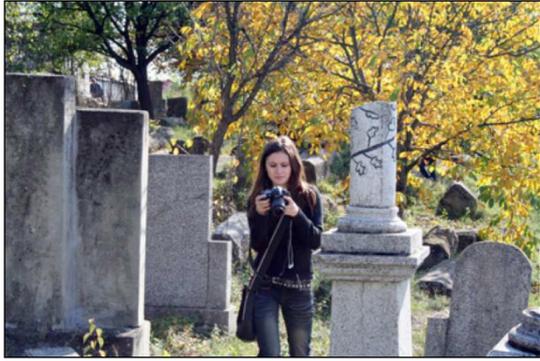
**TIP:** After you google for a photo, you can filter the search results to use only copyright-free pictures. To filter, click on the “Search tools” (see screenshot below), select “usage rights” and choose “free to use or share”. Under search tools, you can also filter by the size to find only pictures of high resolution.



Going to a museum or archive: Getting pictures to scan should not prove too difficult, but it might take a long time and might cost money.

Therefore, students can, if they are serious about it, simply take a good photo with their own camera of a photo sitting on a desk—and then use that. However, it is important to make a good quality photo. See sample below. And be sure to shoot in high resolution! Later, you can use a photo editing program to cut the photo out.





**Step 3.** At this point, you have some old photos and you have done good research. Students should now visit the Jewish sites in their town (or nearby town) and take good photos with their digital cameras or shoot video. Many cell phones now offer the option for shooting video, but it would be better to use something of higher quality, if possible.

When shooting video, here are a few basic rules:

--If the thing or person you are shooting is moving, then you can hold the video camera and shoot it. If the person is sitting, or if you are shooting a synagogue or cemetery, *then use a tripod!*

--If you want to show us the dome of a synagogue, then slowly pan up the camera.

--Each shot should last 20 seconds.

--If you are going to be listening to someone, try and find a way to get a small microphone in front of him or her, because the microphone on the camcorder usually won't be good enough—especially if they are outside on the street, where there is too much noise. We realize you may not be able to find a mike for this, but do try.

**Step 4.** The students then need to create a story board or script—in English. The script needs to be in MS word, and the photos dragged and dropped into the word doc. (please note: don't drag high res photos into your word doc as it will crash!).

Remember: students need to be told, over and over again, *“We want you to tell us a story. Use photos or video or both, but make it a story for us.”* If your school has a creative writing course, then this teacher should certainly be able to help.

Here is an example of a basic story line on a town's Jewish history—but remember, you can use video or still photos or both. That's up to you.

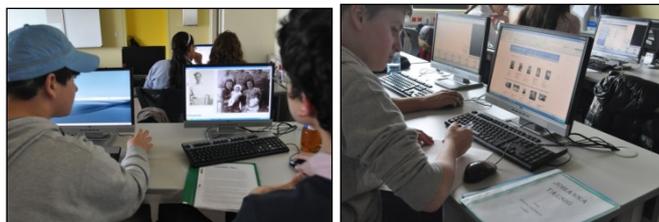
	<p>This is a picture of our town, which was founded in 1120. Around 500,000 people live here today, and we would like to introduce you to our town's Jewish history.</p>
	<p>Jews lived here since the 1300s, and at their peak, in 1920, there were 11,000 Jews here.</p>

	<p>Jewish families contributed in many ways to the growth of our city. They were workers, tavern owners, doctors, lawyers</p>
	<p>Many of the shops were owned by Jewish families, like the one owned by Mr Herskovits.</p>
	<p>We had two Jewish schools in our town. Here is the graduating class of 1920.</p>
	<p>And here is another picture. That is not Hebrew written above, by the way—that's Yiddish, and it reads: _____.</p>
	<p>Hashomer Hatzair was very important in our town, and we have several pictures of the Hashomer "ken." Hashomer was: <i>[give a description]</i></p>
 <p><small>Troops of Betar in Uniform Berlin 1936 (Photo Institut Jabotinsky)</small></p>	<p>If there was one Jewish youth group, there would naturally be a competitor, and we also had a Betar club here, too.</p>
	<p>Sports was always important here—this is a picture of the Maccabi swim team from the 1930s.</p>
	<p>The Holocaust came to our city in 1941. Although around 4,500 Jews escaped, around 5,000 were deported to the death camps in 1942 and most were killed there. Here are some identity papers of Jews in our town. We took this picture in our city archive.</p>
	<p>Here is a photo of the place where the Jews were shot. It is called _____.</p>
	<p>Today we have one synagogue in our city, and this is Mr Karp, who is the president of the community.</p>

		<p>This is the interior of the synagogue, and it is quite beautiful. The architect's name was Leo Roston and it was built in 1899. Here are some details of the synagogue:</p> <p>--</p> <p>--</p> <p>--</p>
		<p>Our Jewish cemetery is also beautiful, with around 5,000 graves, but it is obviously overgrown.</p>
		<p>Here is a monument in the Jewish cemetery to those who were deported. We counted 98 names on this memorial, and it was for Jews killed in work camps in _____.</p>
		<p>Mr Bernzweig is a member of the Jewish community. He was a dentist, survived Auschwitz, and lives in our city today.</p>
		<p>Mr Karp and Mr Bernzweig have Friday evening services in the synagogue and they say traditional prayers.</p>
		<p>Although there are not many Jews today in our town, we do have a Sunday school, where twenty children attend.</p>
		<p>We have a very lively Jewish school in our city, and students from our school now work as doctors, lawyers and scientists!</p>
		<p>We hope you have enjoyed this virtual visit to our Jewish community. We have learned that in the Jewish religion, Zachor is a very important word. It means to remember. And we remember our Jewish community.</p>

Please remember—this is only meant to be a guideline, a template. Naturally, if you can film a Hanukkah party or a choir of the older people in the community singing, these would be interesting, too.

Important: when students have finished their script, they need to submit it to the English teacher for a grammar check and story telling flow. They should also submit the script to the history teacher, who can do some fact checking, just to be sure. We at Centropa would also be glad to read the scripts for you.



**Step 5.** Students then need to make their video, which can be done in so many programs now—Microsoft Movie Maker, Sony Vegas, Apple iMovie, etc. If your school has an IT department or a teacher that specializes in video or film, then please have them help, too. They will record their English language voice over.

As some basic tips, consider the following steps, regardless of your choice of software

1. Collecting
  - a. Collect your materials and place them into a single folder
    - i. Images
    - ii. Video Clips
    - iii. Audio Files
    - iv. Sound Effects
2. Importing
  - a. Open your software and make sure you have access to “import” the materials you collected into your software
  - b. Import all materials so that you can arrange them into an organized film
3. Arrangement
  - a. Your software will have a “timeline” or “project area” where you can arrange your materials to create your film.
  - b. Consider performing your narration first, at the speed and tone you wish, and then add the materials.
  - c. Once narration is complete, add your images, audio files, video clips and sound effects

\*\*Remember to save frequently during this process!
4. Converting
  - a. Finalize your film into a .MOV or a .MP4
  - b. Save the finalized version to your computer
  - c. Use the saved file to share online

At the end of the film, they should list all the names of the students who participated, and they should thank the city library, Jewish community—or whoever helped them with their research.

The final step is to upload the film, and we can review those instructions with you. Your clever students will know how to upload to blip or youtube.