

STUDY GUIDE

l'Dor V'Dor: An Eternal Tree

SCAN TO WATCH (26M 46S)



Name _____

Hour _____ Date _____

WATCH AND COMPLETE

- 1 According to Alissa VanderKooi (granddaughter of Henry Pestka), what does the Hebrew phrase "l'dor v'dor" mean?
- 2 Which concentration camp was Henry Pestka imprisoned in?
- 3 What age group was Henry Pestka in when the Nazis invaded Poland in September of 1939?
- 4 Was Henry Pestka comfortable talking about his experience during the Holocaust? Provide one specific example that shows how he addressed it with his family.
- 5 What is one of the reasons the sculptor, Ariel Schlesinger, chose to make the tree a fruit tree?
- 6 Were all people excited about the website that was published for this sculpture? Explain your answer.
- 7 What event in the Holocaust inspired the pieces of broken glass in the sculpture? What was the significance of that event?
- 8 Has anti-Semitism stopped in Michigan recently? Provide one example that supports your answer.

- 9 What was Henry doing when he escaped Auschwitz?
- 10 What brought Henry back to Grand Rapids after escaping Auschwitz?
- 11 What was one of the most important construction projects Henry worked on?
- 12 Though he was not particularly religious, why did he want to complete the project mentioned above?

OPINION-BASED QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- 13 Early in the documentary, there is an effort to help visualize "6 million people".
- A** How hard or easy is it for you to wrap your head around this number?
- B** Six million represents the decimation of the Jewish people alone. Now add an additional 5 million to represent the other of people who were identified as "the enemy" or a threat who were also Holocaust victims: the Roma, people with physical and intellectual disabilities, people suffering with mental health issues, people who identified as LGBTQ+ (or were suspected to be), political opponents and prisoners, people who were not Christian or white, citizens who hid or helped "enemies" or anyone who resisted or defied the Nazi regime.
- How hard or easy is it for you to wrap your head around 11 million?
- C** What are some ways we can help to society conceptualize just how many people were killed in this tragedy?
- 14 What might be significant about Henry Pestka experiencing the Holocaust as a college-aged young adult? How might his experience/perspective have differed compared to children or older adults?

OPINION-BASED QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- 15 When you consider your answers to questions #6 and #8, are you surprised by the rates of antisemitism in West Michigan? Why or why not?
- 16 What, if anything, do you think should be done to hold people accountable for their anti-Semitic speech or actions?
- 17 How effective do you think the "Ways to Say Goodbye" exhibit is for helping younger generations connect to the significance of the Holocaust? What are other ways to meaningfully connect young people to the Holocaust?
- 18 Was there anything that felt different to you when learning about a Holocaust survivor with ties to the Grand Rapids area rather than a distant location? Explain your answer.
- 19 The phrase "Never Forget" is often said as part of Holocaust remembrance.
- A What factors or conditions do you think made it possible for the Holocaust to take place? Try to name at least 3-5. Be specific.
- B Do you think it is possible for something like the Holocaust to happen again? Why or why not?