

# THE VIENNA PROJECT TEACHING UNIT

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

### Overall Objectives

- To increase their awareness of memorials and remembrance practices
  - improve consciousness of monuments and memorials
  - the ability to consider remembrance practices critically
- To learn about the various victim groups targeted by National Socialism in Austria
- To gain a deeper understanding in how thorough a system can be in oppressing its citizens
- To have a taste or flavor of the experience of oppression
- To deepen their understanding of the city of Vienna and its history
- To reinforce historical learning by tying it to place and physical experience
- To introduce students to the aftermath of WWII (post-war experiences, restitution and memory); to improve their awareness of how these events shape the world they live in today
- To practice skills of research and presentation
- To allow students to practice performing research and presenting in English (when applicable)

### LESSON III and IV: THE VIENNA PROJECT HISTORICAL TOURS

#### Suggested Grade Level

Ages 14-18

#### Duration of Activity

Introduction and Research: 50 mins

Tour Program: 1.5-2 hours

#### Historical Context

Students should have at least an overview of WWII and Holocaust history and a basic understanding of events in Austria's history from 1938-1945. They should be familiar with the different persecuted victim groups of WWII, particularly those in Austria.

#### Teacher Preparation

Print student worksheets: Tour Overview Worksheet (*Optional*), and either the Jewish Communities Worksheets, the Political Systems Worksheets, or the Highlights of the Wiener Ringstraße Worksheets, Suggested Reading Worksheet (*Optional*)

*Optional:* Collect print resources for student research from suggested reading list

*Optional:* Reserve library or computer lab for students to begin research

#### Overview

Over the course of these two lessons, students will develop their own class tour of The Vienna Project, based on The Vienna Project's original programming. The Vienna Project created three tour frameworks that tie a range of sites together in a thematic journey that can be made on foot or with public transport.

## THE VIENNA PROJECT TOURS

### 1. Highlights of the Vienna Ringstraße

This tour visits some of the major highlights and familiar symbols of the Wiener Ringstraße and talks about their lesser known history during WWII. Tour locations include the Wiener Staatsoper, the Naturhistorisches Museum, the Mahnmal gegen Krieg und Fascismus, and the University of Vienna.

#### *Tour Goals:*

1. *To give tour attendees a deeper and more complex understanding of Vienna's most iconic and well-known institutions and the roles they played under National Socialism*
2. *To explore how Nazi beliefs and prejudices infiltrated and affected all levels of Viennese society, including art, science, education, and law*
3. *To explore public memory and monument practices in Vienna*
4. *To discuss the "hidden memory" of lesser-known National Socialist history, and the importance of acknowledging this history as it pertains to present-day institutions*

### 2. Political Systems: National Socialism in Vienna

This tour discusses some of the legal and political systems introduced to Vienna under National Socialism, exploring issues of visas and travel, seizure of property, the justice system and prisons. Highlights include the former Center for Jewish Immigration, the former Chinese Consulate, the Tribunal of Vienna, and the Josefstadt Prison.

#### *Tour Goals:*

1. *To provide tour attendees with basic knowledge about the history of National Socialism in Austria, particularly as it pertains to legal and political systems*
2. *To highlight how various systems of persecution were enshrined in law, and how they targeted diverse victim groups*
3. *To clearly express the difficulties faced by those wishing to immigrate (i.e. to answer the question, "Why didn't people just leave?")*
4. *To explore the effects of these systems during post-war years, such as with issues of restitution, treatment of homosexuality, and treatment of Roma and Sinti*

### 3. A Day in the Life: Pre-War Jewish Communities of the Leopoldstadt and Alsergrund Districts

This tour visits numerous institutions of Jewish culture in two of Vienna's Jewish neighborhoods and discusses their history both before and during WWII. Tour sites include the former Leopoldstadt Temple, the former Turkish Temple, the Talmud Thora School, the Servitengasse Memorial, and the Seegasse Jewish Cemetery.

#### *Tour Goals:*

1. *To give tour attendees a foundation in the Jewish history and culture of Vienna*
2. *To demonstrate the political, cultural, and religious diversity within the pre-1938 Viennese Jewish community*
3. *To discuss the role of Jewish identity in a pre- and post-WWI Austrian context*
4. *To inspire conversation about memory landscapes and absence of memory*
  - a. *In the act of visiting sites that often no longer exist*
  - b. *In discussing the public memorials (or lack thereof) erected on these sites*

## LESSON III

### Activity

1. Explain to the students that they will be creating their own tour of TVP sites as a class. They must create a presentation based on one of the historical and memorial locations on the tour, including:

- The history of the site
- The victim group(s) represented by this site
- The significance of the site in historical memory
- Post-war memory or memorials attached to this site; if there is none, the reason why

Students must prepare to give a 3-5 minute presentation to classmates on the site's location (teachers should decide the appropriate length).

*Optional:* Presentations may also include:

- A one-page handout for classmates with the most important information about the site
- Visuals of the site: old photographs, propaganda posters, people whose history are tied to the site's, etc

2. *Optional:* After reviewing the assignment, either the teacher may select the tour that they find most appropriate for the class, or the teacher may give students the **Tour Overview Worksheet** and allow them to vote on the tour that they find most interesting.

3. After a tour is selected, students should be divided into pairs or small groups and each assigned one of the sites on the tour. They should be then given the appropriate **Tour Worksheet** for their particular historical site. They may also be given a **Suggested Readings Worksheet** to help with their research.

**Note:** There are two different versions of the tour worksheets available: the first simply presents the site and a bit of background, and the second includes "Questions to Consider" which prompt a deeper investigation of the site's history. The worksheets with questions are recommended for older students or for students judged with a higher capability for research. The worksheets without questions may be more appropriate for younger students, who can do a shorter presentation of their site's history and importance.

4. *Optional:* If the rest of the class period is available, students may begin working on their assignment.

## LESSON IV

### Activity

1. Students and teachers will go on a field trip to visit the sites on their tour. The students assigned to research each site will make a 3-5 minute presentation (depending on teacher preference) introducing their site, the history behind it, the victim group(s) that it represents, and why it is significant.

*Optional:* If it is not possible to visit these sites in person, teachers may choose to go on a “virtual classroom tour”, and have each student group present their site with visual and/or technological aids.