

FINDING KALMAN: a film
by Roz Jacobs and Laurie Weisman

Film Discussion and Activity Guide, Grades 9–12

Materials needed:

Finding Kalman film ([link](#))

Reproducible for students

Optional: *The Memory Project: Connecting Art and History Educator's Guide*. ([Download](#))

Synopsis

Kalman and Anna are Jewish children who manage to escape from the Warsaw Ghetto at the height of the Nazi occupation. But at fourteen Kalman disappears without a trace while 17 year-old Anna ends up in a forced labor camp. As Anna recounts their story we watch her daughter, Roz, paint Kalman's portrait over and over again. The story reaches across four generations to Anna's granddaughter, Maya, a musician playing in a contemporary Israeli-Arab orchestra and great-grandson Roy, who somehow feels connected to Anna and Kalman's struggle for survival. The act of painting and sharing the story transforms Kalman's image into a universal expression of love and loss.

Note: This film tells about a family trapped in the Warsaw ghetto. There are 45 seconds showing disturbing images of the Warsaw ghetto from 10:50 through 11:28 in the film. These include starving people and two dead bodies without clothing being placed on a hand wagon. We recommend you preview the film to see if it's appropriate for your students.

Have students view the film and choose at least three of the questions on the reproducible.

1. Anna's older sister, Henia, wanted to leave the Warsaw ghetto in the early days of the ghetto and go to the Soviet Union with her boyfriend. Why did their mother discourage her? How did their mother respond later, when Anna, her middle child wanted to flee the ghetto? Why do you think their mother changed her mind?
2. Think about the choices the family had to make—to stay together and risk almost certain death or to separate in the hope of saving lives. Write an imaginary letter from a parent to a child explaining the decision she or he made to either keep the family together or to separate. (You'll need a separate page for this.)
3. In the film, Roz Jacobs asks, "How do we connect to our past? How do we connect to people who we never met who have affected our lives?" How does this film reflect her

answer to that question. How would you answer that question for yourself?

4. In the film, you heard from a Holocaust survivor, her daughter, granddaughter and great-grandson. How is the experience of the Holocaust different for each person? How does the meaning of experiences change over generations? Think of someone in your family. How have that person's experiences affected their life? What effects have that person's experiences had on *your* life?
5. Many survivors of the Holocaust and other genocides don't even have a photograph to remind them of people they lost. Describe the impact of different photographs on the filmmaker—from the photograph of her uncle Kalman to the photographs she saw at the Holocaust museum Yad Vashem? Write about a photograph or artifact that is especially meaningful to you.
6. One thing the filmmakers experienced as they traveled with the film is people saying, "You're so lucky you asked these questions when you could. Then they speak of a relative who is no longer alive and things they wish they could ask that person. You can avoid that regret. Think of someone who you'd like to know more about. Make a list of questions and set up a time to talk with them. After your interview, write a story or poem about what you learned and share it with the person you interviewed.
7. Anna Jacobs said, "I want to remember and I want to have a good time too. One thing doesn't go without the other. Pain goes together with happiness. You cannot forget about happiness and you cannot forget about pain. So I don't want to forget. What does this statement mean to you? Do you agree or disagree?
8. How have art and music helped the people in the film deal with loss and conflict? Describe a situation when music or other art forms have helped you cope with difficult emotions?
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Internet Resources

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum <http://www.ushmm.org>

Yad Vashem <http://yadvashem.org>

The History Place: Holocaust Timeline

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html>

The Holocaust: A Tragic Legacy

<http://library.thinkquest.org/12663/>