

THE HOLOCAUST - A SONG SHEET

This song sheet has been created for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2018 and is part of a series which provides lyrics and music for songs created during, or in response to, a genocide. As part of your Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration, you are invited to perform this song and learn more about the genocide below.



THE HOLOCAUST

Between 1941 and 1945 the Nazi German government attempted to destroy the Jewish population of Europe. From the time they assumed power in 1933, the Nazis used propaganda, persecution, and laws to deny human and civil rights to Jews, using centuries of antisemitism as their foundation. By the end of the Holocaust, six million Jewish men, women and children had been murdered in ghettos, mass-shootings, and in concentration and extermination camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.

Music was used by the Nazis as a tool in the process of genocide. The *Reichsmusikkammer* was a Nazi institution that decided what music was acceptable. Unsuitable music was banned, and Jewish musicians found it impossible to find work. Infamously, Auschwitz had a prisoners' orchestra; its members were forced to play music to accompany inmates marching to work. The SS hoped that hearing music would make the prisoners more obedient and docile.

You can read the life story of Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, a member of the Auschwitz camp orchestra, at hmd.org.uk/anita.

Many Jews also used music as a source of hope, a form of resistance, or a way of mourning and commemorating the victims of the Holocaust. An example of music used as an act of resistance is *The Partisans' Song*, which we have provided for you to learn here.

The power of words is the theme for HMD 2018. We invite you to reflect on the words and music of this song, to feature it as part your HMD activity, and to reflect on how words can be used both to propagate monstrous crimes, and to oppose them.

Find out more:

The Holocaust: hmd.org.uk/holocaust

You can find the rest of the song sheets and hear recordings of the songs at hmd.org.uk/songs



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

THE PARTISANS' SONG

The Partisans' Song was originally written in Yiddish in 1943 by a young Jewish poet named Hirsh Glik. Glik was imprisoned in the Vilna Ghetto and heard about the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Inspired, he wrote this song and set it to an existing tune written by Soviet-Jewish composers Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass.

The lyrics acknowledge past and present Jewish suffering and hardship, but encourage the Jewish people to keep fighting for survival. The song became an act of resistance to Nazi rule, and was adopted by partisans across Europe as their anthem.

Hirsh Glik survived the liquidation of the Vilna Ghetto, and was sent to a concentration camp in Estonia in 1944. He escaped and joined up with a band of partisans, and was killed in combat by German soldiers.

Lyrics: Hirsh Glik
Music: Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass
Translation: Miriam Schlesinger

Nev-er say the fin-al jour-ney is at hand__ Nev-er say we will not meet the Prom-ised Land____ The
6 longed for hour shall come oh ne-ver fear____ Our tread drums forth the ti-dings we are here____ The
10 longed for hour will come oh ne-ver fear____ Our tread drums forth the ti-dings we are here!

(The last two lines of each verse are repeated)

Never say the final journey is at hand
Never say we will not meet the Promised Land,
The longed-for hour shall come, oh never fear!
Our tread drums forth the tidings - we are here!

From land of palm-tree to the far-off land of snow,
We shall be coming with our torment and our woe.
And everywhere our blood has sunk into the earth,
Shall our bravery, our vigor blossom forth!

We'll have the morning sun to set our day aglow,
And all our yesterdays shall vanish with the foe,
And if the time is long before the sun appears,
Then let this song go like a signal through the years.

This song was written with our blood and not with lead;
It's not a song that birds sing overhead,
It was a people, among toppling barricades,
That sang this song of ours with pistols and grenades.

So never say that there is only death for you.
Leaden skies may be concealing days of blue -
Because the hour we have hungered for is near;
Beneath our tread the earth shall tremble: We are here!

To view the original
Yiddish lyrics for
The Partisans' Song,
please visit:
hmd.org.uk/songs

