

The title - Centropa's Border Jumping Project: Connecting Students Through Pastimes Then and Now

**Age-** 12-16

**Description-**

Through this BJP, students watched six Centropa films and chose two of Centropa's films to look at the pastimes and leisure activities of featured Jews. Then, students created a Google slide show to make connections between their own pastimes, and those featured in their selected films. The project consists of five goals:

- 1) to focus on the pastimes of featured Centropa biographies;
- 2) to obtain a broader perspective about Jewish life in various European countries prior to, during and after The Holocaust;
- 3) to make a connection to the favorite leisure activities of Jewish interviewees;
- 4) to elaborate on their own pastimes to learn more about one another; and
- 5) to raise an awareness for respecting the culture, traditions, and religion of their partner while promoting solidarity, tolerance, and empathy.

## Centropa's Border Jumping Project: Connecting Students Through Pastimes Then and Now

It has been said that, "In order to understand the tragedy of the Holocaust, we must first understand what we lost." This can be challenging for an 8th grade English Language Arts teacher like me who teaches a predominantly Hispanic community in the greater Los Angeles area. In fact, when I first introduce this subject matter to my students, I begin with the following question: *What do you know about Jews?* Sadly, most remain silent, blank stares and all. Only a few make reference to the Holocaust and/or reference Anne Frank. However, I'll be damned if my students enter 9th grade believing that—as absurd as it sounds—the purpose of Jews was to die.

Even well before immersing themselves in the horrors of the Holocaust, my students become familiar with vocabulary associated with Jewish life; terms like, Sabbath, synagogue, Purim, menorah, bar mitzvah, kippah, Passover, and Torah, to name a few. Students are also exposed to examples of antisemitism originating from the times of Christ to recent cases that made news headlines. And then, we get to "the bread and butter" of the unit: The Border Jumping Project (BJP), a project that clearly reflects one of Centropa's core beliefs that *we don't believe in borders*.

I first heard of this amazing opportunity for my students in 2019 while attending Centropa's Summer Academy (CSA) in Berlin. The program consisted of hearing from authors, representatives of the Stolpersteine Project, experts in the field of prewar and post war Jewish studies, and visits to important sites such as the House of the Wannsee Conference, the Topography of Terror, and the Jewish Museum Berlin. The eight days I spent in Berlin inspired me to complete my first BJP with Croatian Educator Andrea Sertic of Slovanski Brod. Students did such an impressive job with the project, that I was once again invited to Berlin in 2021 (which was postponed to 2022 due to Covid-19), but this time I wasn't merely a student; I was asked to serve as a BJP elective coordinator, a clear testament of yet another one of Centropa's core beliefs that *no one teaches a teacher better than another teacher*.

I've been fortunate to have completed a BJP with students for four consecutive years now. One year after working with Croatian students from Matija Mesic Gymnasium, my students collaborated with the students of Israeli teacher Amikam Peled of Har Tuv High school located in Kibbutz Tzor'a. The following year, my students completed a BJP with a new group of students from the same school under the supervision of teacher Nomi Bass. Finally, last year brought my students in touch with the pupils of Anke Shimmer of Dortmund, Germany.

Making pastimes and leisure activities the focus of the BJP made it easy for students to become vested in the projects as they soon realize that their own pastimes are comparable to those of Jews almost 100 years ago. And this connection to the "bigger picture" is taken a step further when students realize that they share similar pastimes with their project partner who is from a different culture and timezone.

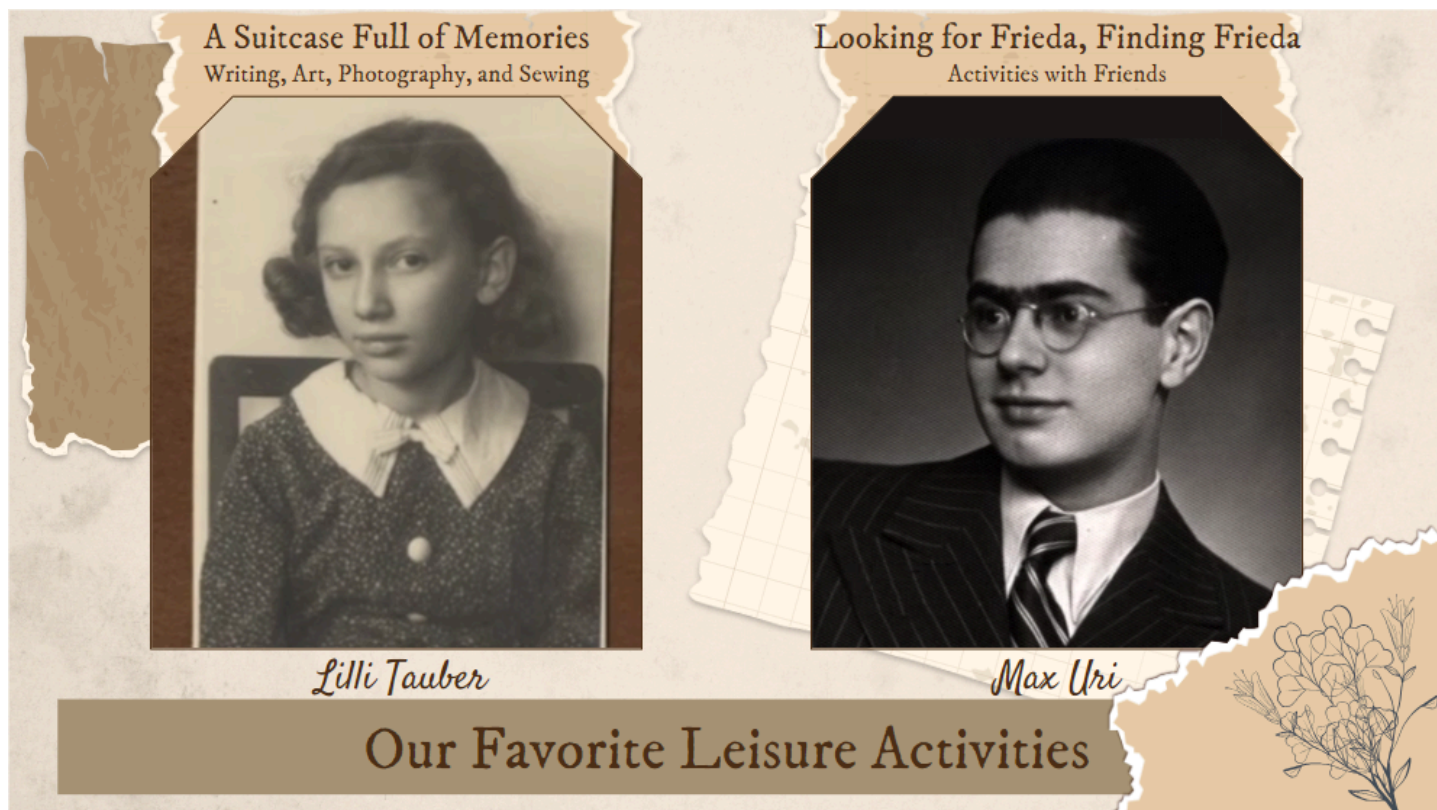
The BJP consists of five goals/outcomes for students: 1) to focus on the pastimes of featured Centropa biographies; 2) to obtain a broader perspective about Jewish life in various European countries prior to, during and after The Holocaust; 3) to make a connection to the favorite leisure activities of Jewish interviewees; 4) to elaborate on their own pastimes to learn more about one another; and 5) to raise an awareness for respecting the culture, traditions, and religion of their partner while promoting solidarity, tolerance, and empathy.

This past year, students used 6 Centropa films to incorporate into their project while focusing on the pastimes they could connect with. The films included *A Suitcase Full of Memories* (featuring the pastimes of art, photography, and letter writing in the life of Lilli Tauber); *The Best Stories of My Life* (with Herbert Lewin and the pastimes of listening to music and attending concerts); *Looking For Frieda, Finding Frieda* (showcasing

Max Uri and the pastime of enjoying time with friends); *The Past is Another Country* (highlighting Leo Luster and the pastime of watching films); *Return to Rivne* (staring cousins Shelly Weiner and Raya Kizhnerman and the pastime of arts and crafts); and, finally, *Zahor - Remember* (featuring Heinz and Manfred Mayer and the pastime of playing sports).

Students select two to three Centropa films to include as part of their Google Slides project, but the inclusion of Jewish learning only takes up about 40% of the project. During the 2019 Centropa Summer Academy, founder Ed Serotta said that the BJP must be about the students first and foremost...not about the featured Jews, not about The Holocaust, and not about Centropa itself. I took that to heart, and that is why the BJP I created prioritizes the students and their families, pets, music, video games, sports, religion, favorite customs, unique foods, etc. The result makes for an organic learning process in which students who have absolutely no connection to Jewry realize the story of a resilient people who have flourished stronger than ever after 1945.

Four years after organizing my first BJP, I am excited to soon work with 2022 CSA alumni Olha Taratula of Sambir, Ukraine, to continue this learning tradition that really is the highlight of my teaching career. Centropa has provided me with the tools and means to connect students to the larger world around them, which in turn allows students to realize that the world isn't as big as they thought once they discover that there's a Croatian, Israeli, German, or Ukrainian teenager who has more in common with them than they think.



Student-created Border Jumping Project Slide featuring native Austrians Lilli Tauber of Wiener Neustadt, and Max Uri of Vienna.

# Lilli Tauber

## A suitcase full of memories



Lilli Tauber was born in 1927 and grew up with her family in Vienna. Since she was eleven years old, she went to a junior high school and had a friend named Andrea but on March 12th everything changed. Lilli wasn't allowed to go to the normal junior high school anymore so she went to the class for all the Jewish children in the synagogue. One day Lilli and her mother were brought to the synagogue by the Gestapo and were searched for money and jewellery. They took everything and Lilli and her mother had to stay there. A few days later, they were brought to Vienna and set free. On 11th July, Lilli fled to London with a Kindertransport and went to a hostel there. In 1942 she began an apprenticeship as a tailor and in 1946 she went to her aunt Berta to Vienna. From there she and her aunt went to Prein, where she worked as a salesperson. At Pentecost 1953 she met Max Tauber. They got married on New Year's Eve and had two children named Wilhelm and Heinz.

To take her mind off things, she drew a lot...

Student-produced Border Jumping Project slide summarizing the story of Kindertransport survivor Lilli Tauber.



Although I'm definitely not as big into art as I used to be, I still enjoy it from time to time.

Making little drawings on pieces of paper takes my mind off of things and I find it kind of nostalgic since I don't do it often. I love taking pictures! Taking pics is how I remember special moments and I also love taking dumb pics of my family and friends because I think they're funny.

Kaylee



I really like drawing. I enjoy the process and seeing the results just makes me happy.

Unfortunately, I don't draw very often because it takes time and I have so many other things to do...

I also like taking pictures (especially of my friends) to keep memories...

Ella

## Pastime 1. Art & Photography

Border Jumping Project Slide connecting with Lilli Tauber's *A Suitcase Full of Memories* featuring the pastimes of art and photography by students Kaylee of El Monte, California, and Ella of Dortmund, Germany.

*Students will use this document to keep track of the pastimes featured in the six Centropa videos. WE will complete the following form for each video IN CLASS. You will use the information at a later time once you get going with your Border Jumping Project.*

Film Title: A Suitcase Full of Memories

Link: English

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/lilli-tauber-suitcase-full-memories?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/lilli-tauber-suitcase-full-memories?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivor: Lilli Tauber

Featured Pastimes: Writing, Art, Photography, and Sewing

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Sewing	Lilli's father was a master tailor in Austria.	3:29
Letter Writing (modern day communication like texting or social media comments; writing diary entries).	Lilli and her parents wrote letters to one another to communicate. She was in England, while her parents were in Austria.	9:34
Art	separated from her parents. Lilli drew a lot to take her mind off things, like being	15:48
Sewing/Making clothing	Lilli worked as a seamstress apprentice in London.	16:35
Photography	Lilli's father made it a point to have a photographer take photos to document everyday life in the Opole Ghetto in Poland.	19:05

Film Title: Return to Rivne

Link: Ukraine

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Auk](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Auk)

English [https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivors: Shelly Weiner & Raya Kizhnerman (cousins)

Featured Pastimes: Arts and Crafts

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Arts & Crafts	Shelly and Raya would use straw to create dolls or animals to entertain themselves.	10:01

Film Title: Living with History

Link:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/rosa-rosenstein-living-history?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/rosa-rosenstein-living-history?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivor: Rosa Rosenstein

Featured Pastimes: Family and Love

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Siblings	Rosa came from a large family, and had four siblings (3 sisters, and a brother).	0:18
Love at first sight	Rosa first met her future husband, Maximilian (aka Michi), while working across from each other in factories.	1:07
Taking the initiative to engage	Michi had a messenger send a box of chocolates to Rosa, "and that's how it all started."	1:25
Marriage	Rosa and Michi married in Berlin in 1929	1:39
Having children	They started their family. Bessy was born in 1929, and Lilly was born in 1933.	2:11
Working together	Rosa and Michi worked together in a tailor shop.	2:42
Saving the Children	Their two daughters were sent to Palestine to live with their aunt and uncle.	3:22
Second Marriage	After her husband died in a Ukrainian labor camp in 1943, Rosa married Alfred Rosenstein two years later.	4:01
Children	Georg, her son, was born in 1945.	4:06
Reuniting the family	Rosa goes to Palestine/Israel to obtain her two daughters.	4:19
Family life and grandchildren	Rosa remained in Vienna, Austria, but constantly traveled to Israel, where her entire family lived, grandchildren included.	4:56
Celebrating Life	On her 90th birthday, Rosa's family from all over the world attended her party to celebrate with her.	5:42

Film Title: The Best Stories of My Life

Link:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/herbert-lewin-stories-my-life?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/herbert-lewin-stories-my-life?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivor: Herbert Lewin

Featured Pastimes: Listening to Music, Attending Concerts

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Listening to Music	Herbert would go to Han's (foster brother) house and listen to Radio Warsaw because they always broadcasted concerts. That gave him a break from everyday life. He felt safe.	3:58
Purchasing Music	Lewin uses his first paycheck in Palestine to purchase a small portable phonograph (record player) and 15 records.	6:53
Playing Music	Lewin visited Hans and Esther Rosenberg and played his music on their terrace.	7:03
Music can bring up memories	Lewin's wife, Trude, would tear up everytime she heard a Viennese radio station that reminded her of home.	7:37
Attending live musical performances	Once they moved to Vienna, Lewin and his wife attended the Volksoper, which they attended three to four times a season.	8:26
Using music as a solace/comfort	Once his wife died in 2001, Lewin said, "What saved me was music, and music is my salvation to this very day."	8:50

Film Title: Looking for Frieda, Finding Frieda

Link:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/max-uri-looking-frieda-finding-frieda?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/max-uri-looking-frieda-finding-frieda?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivors: Max Uri

Featured Pastimes: Activities with Friends

=

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Summer camp with Friends	Max Uri met his future wife, Frieda Haber, at a summer camp in Breitenstein, Simmering where he got to spend time with friends.	0:33
Good friends	We learn that Max has a friend named Leo.	0:46
Friends at the beach	Max once again meets Frieda, along with other friends, at the beach.	1:03

Film Title: Zahor - Remember

Link: Ukraine

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Auk](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Auk)

English

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Featured Survivor: Heinz and Manfred Mayer (Narration by Ilay Elm kies)

Featured Pastimes: Sports

Pastime	Description	Time Stamp
Playing soccer (football)	The narrator, Ilay Elm kies, is a 17 year old student who plays soccer with the TSG Hoffenheim Academy.	1:15
Playing soccer	Ilay plays soccer at any given moment when he has free time.	1:38



## FINAL FILM LIST

Lilli Tauber - writing, art, photography 😊


Ukraine (unavailable)

English


[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/lilli-tauber-suitcase-full-memories?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/lilli-tauber-suitcase-full-memories?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Activity: Padlet

Directions: Complete the assigned padlet after watching the Centropa film titled "A Suitcase Full of Memories" (with Lilli Tauber). Upload one photo with 12 of your most cherished Kindertransport items. Make sure to include your name, age and city in the heading. On the Padlet, provide a description of your most cherished item. You can only select one. You will also take this opportunity to give information about yourself that will help Ukrainian students get to know you, like, age, hobbies, annoyances, pets, family members, favorite subject, etc.

 **Anonymous** 1m

**Ema Ruballos-El Monte,  
California**



Out of all my 12 items, the most cherished thing would be my necklace. This necklace is something I always wear because it has a connection to multiple family members and friends. If I went on a Kindertransport and I never got to see my family or friends, this necklace will be something that reminds me of them.

Shelly and Raya - arts and crafts 😊

Ukraine (subtitles):

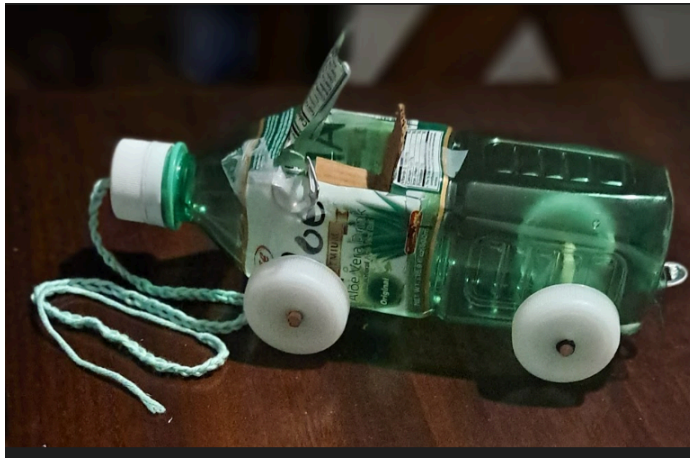
[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Auk](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Auk)

English:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/return-rivne-holocaust-story?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Activity: Creating a Mock Toy

Directions: After we finish viewing the film "Return to Rivne" in class, you will create a "mock" toy using everyday household items that you can tie, glue, or tape together to create a toy. Use at least 5 items. You may not use a part that originally belonged to an actual toy. Be sure to upload a photo of your toy to this assignment to receive credit. You will also be expected to bring your toy to school for display.



Rosa Rosenstein - family

Ukraine (unavailable)

English subtitles:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/rosa-rosenstein-living-history?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/rosa-rosenstein-living-history?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Activity: one page narrative

Directions: After we finish viewing the film "Living With History" in class, create a narrative telling the story of how your parents met. You will need to interview your parents to gather the needed information. If possible, interview both parents to gain insight into each of their perspectives.

Herbert Lewin - Listening to music

Ukraine (unavailable)

English subtitles:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/herbert-lewin-stories-my-life?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/herbert-lewin-stories-my-life?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Activity: Collage

Directions: After watching “The Best Stories of my Life,” create a Google Doc that features at least 10 images of your favorite music artists/bands. Include your favorite song lyrics, albums, etc.

Max Uri - activities with friends

Ukraine (unavailable)

English subtitles:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/max-uri-looking-frieda-finding-frieda?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/max-uri-looking-frieda-finding-frieda?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Ade&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Aen)

Activity: Word Cloud

Directions: After watching “Looking for Frieda, Finding Frieda,” you will complete a WORD CLOUD activity after writing your list of significant words taken from the film.



Zahor - Sports as a leisure activity 😊

Ukraine (subtitles):

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle\\_language%3Auk](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen&f%5B1%5D=subtitle_language%3Auk)

English:

[https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio\\_language%3Aen](https://www.centropa.org/en/centropa-cinema/zahor-remember?f%5B0%5D=audio_language%3Aen)

Activity: Venn Diagram

Directions: You will complete a VENN DIAGRAM showing the similarities and differences between brothers Heinz and Manfred Mayer. As you will see, both brothers were affected differently by the Holocaust.

