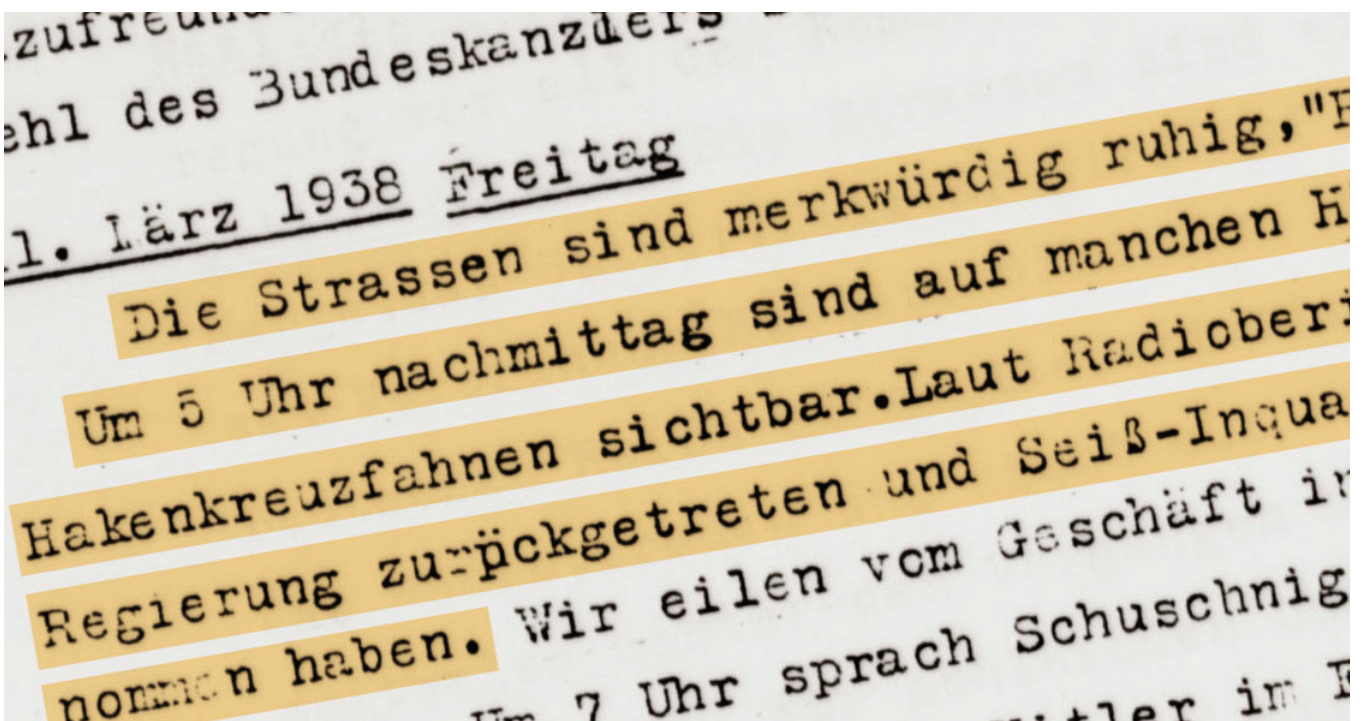


TWO YEARS IN THE LIFE OF ADOLPH MARKUS

Students examine diary entries of Adolph Markus from 1938 and 1939 to understand the personal impacts the Nazi's takeover of Austria had on Jewish citizens.



QUESTION EXAMINED

**WHAT ASPECTS OF CITIZENSHIP
DID THE NAZIS DISMANTLE IN
ORDER TO CONTROL THE LIVES
OF JEWISH CITIZENS?**

THEMES Persecution, Uncertainty,
Displacement, Resilience, Laws & Citizenship

Subject
**ELA and
Social
Studies**

Grades
6-12

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RESOURCES INCLUDED

FOR TEACHERS

- Context for this Lesson
- About the Diary
- Chronology of Significant Events in the Diary
- Tips for Using this Resource
- Vocabulary
- Focus Questions
- Big Understandings
- Objectives
- Materials Needed
- Links to Diary excerpts
- Procedure
- Notes for Teachers

FOR STUDENTS

- Vocabulary
- Note-taking Sheet
- Blank Timeline
- Diary excerpts
(downloaded and printed from links, or online)

Optional

- Chronology of Significant Events in the Diary
- Context for this Lesson
- About the Diary


Cover Image:
Excerpt from the
diary of Adolph
Markus, entry
March 11, 2019,
Leo Baeck
Archives. Retrieved
Nov 17 2019 from
<https://www.lbi.org/1938projekt/3/calm-before-the-storm>

EXTERNAL  LINKS

[About the Leo Baeck Institute & the 1938 Projekt](#)

[Key Dates: Jews Under the Nazi Regime 1933–1939](#)

An English translation is followed by the original German language transcript.

Additionally, the Leo Baeck Institute has  a fully translated copy of the diary in their digital archives.

These English translations are the ones that students will use for this lesson.

CONTEXT FOR THIS LESSON

Adolph Markus lived in Linz, Austria with his wife and two children before World War II. One month before the “Anschluss” (the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany on March 12, 1938), he started keeping a diary which offers a gripping account of the growing tension. This diary tells the Markus’ story, a Jewish family — husband, wife, and two children — who leave Linz, Austria, to move to Vienna and manage to send their children to England. When the war breaks out in September 1939, the parents manage to immigrate to the US, settling in Los Angeles in late 1939. The diary ends here, without mentioning the children after their arrival in England. Adolph Markus was born 1898 in Linz, Austria; he died in 1971 in Los Angeles, California.

ABOUT THE DIARY

The Adolph Markus diary covers the dates of February 12, 1938–September 30, 1939 (approximately a year and a half). One of the most profound lessons of the diary is how quickly and dramatically life for Jews changed in Austria after the Nazi takeover on March 12, 1938. This lesson asks students to contemplate what truly are the rights of citizens and from where these rights stem. How do we advocate for and protect our rights in the face of systematic and immense opposition?

Several of the diary excerpts appear on the 1938 Projekt website in their original German, with some English translation and contextualization:

<u>February 20</u>	<u>Imminent Danger</u>
<u>March 11</u>	<u>Calm Before the Storm</u>
<u>March 15</u>	<u>Hitler’s Homecoming</u>
<u>April 20</u>	<u>Safe for Now</u>
<u>June 18</u>	<u>Planted Evidence</u>
<u>October 31</u>	<u>Politics and Farewell</u>

CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE DIARY

February 12, 1938	The diary starts in Linz, Austria.
March 12, 1938	Hitler arrives in Linz.
March 13, 1938	Austria annexed to Germany.
March 14, 1938	Family business is closed. Business is taken over by Aryan employers who discharge all of the Jews.
April 20, 1938	Goes to Vienna to discuss emigration with relative.
June 16, 1938	Family is subjected to search and harassment and threatened with deportation.
July 13, 1938	Leaves Linz, goes to Vienna to stay with relatives, his house is confiscated.
September 1939	Hitler annexes Sudetenland, Nazis take over Vienna and ransack Jewish homes.
November 11, 1938	Kritallnacht brings wife and children to Vienna where they have trouble finding housing.
January 1–31, 1939	Works to get children to England [on the Kindertransport] or out to USA.
April, 1939	Children are prepared to leave for England.
April 20, 1939	Writer receives affidavit for US to emigrate there.
April 25, 1939	Children leave with group for England.
May, 1939	Children arrive in England, Couple gets visa for US and book passage on 9/13/39 on the Franconia. All travel plans are suspended due to the outbreak of war on September 3, 1939.
October 30, 1939	Marcus leaves Vienna for Holland and boards ship.
November 2, 1939	Leaves.
November 15, 1939	Arrives New York, helped and domiciled by Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS).
November 24, 1939	Leaves New York by bus to settle in Los Angeles.
November 38, 1939	Arrives in Los Angeles.
Christmas 1939	Memoir ends.

TIPS FOR USING THIS RESOURCE

DIARIES

Diaries are handwritten or typed notes that are informal and personal and not meant to be published for a wide audience. They correspond to immediate events happening in the writer's life and often reflect the writer's emotions and personal responses to these events. Because of their informal, personal nature, diaries can provide an intimate look at a writer's world often including details of daily life and personal observations.

When using diaries it is important to keep the following questions in mind:

- **Who is the writer?**
What do we know about him or her and the time and place he or she was writing?
- **What is the tone of these entries?**
- **What is the writer's point of view?**

VOCABULARY

Dismantle

To take apart; to destroy the integrity of. (Merriam-Webster)

Tacit

Understood or implied without being stated (Google dictionary).
Tacit approval is unspoken, passive approval.

Anti-semitism

Hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as religious, ethnic, or racial group. (Merriam Webster)

Resilience

the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
(Google dictionary)

FOCUS QUESTIONS

How and whom do laws protect and what do they provide access to?

**What is the role of the government?
What does it mean to be a citizen?**

BIG UNDERSTANDINGS

- We often don't understand the impact that laws have on every aspect of our lives: Housing, education, employment, freedom of movement, access to money and other resources, ability to practice a religion, keep our families together, elect our leaders, enjoy basic health and safety protections.
- Laws are chosen and enacted by people in the government; there are no laws of nature that protect our civil and human rights.
- The Nazi government enacted and retracted laws against the Jews that dramatically altered their existence by constricting their ability to live, work, go to school, own a home, be with their families, and advocate for themselves.
- The nature of these changing laws undermined how Jews believed they could live their lives as citizens of Germany and Austria.
- The new laws also changed how non-Jews viewed their Jewish neighbors and empowered the Nazis to enact even more detrimental laws against Jews.
- Our freedom and safety must be actively stewarded from one generation to the next.

TEACHING POINT

The Nazi takeover of Vienna in March 1938 eroded the citizenship rights of Jews in a rapid manner that terrorized the community, took a great emotional toll, and spurred Jews to action in ways large and small.

OBJECTIVES

- 1** Students will examine diary entries of Adolph Markus from 1938 and 1939 to understand the personal impacts the Nazi's takeover of Austria had on Jewish citizens.
- 2** Students will create a timeline of events impacting Adolph Markus and his family in the months of 1938 and 1939 to understand how quickly changing laws and attitudes undermined the way Jews believed they could live their lives as citizens in Germany and Austria.
- 3** Students will present and discuss their findings in light of the Lesson and Focus Questions:
 - **What aspects of citizenship did the Nazis dismantle in order to control the lives of Jewish citizens?**
 - **How and Whom do laws protect and what do they provide access to?**
 - **What is the role of the government? What does it mean to be a citizen?**

EXTERNAL LINKS

[1938 blank calendar](#)

[1939 blank calendar](#)

[Diary Set 1](#)

[Diary Set 2](#)

[Diary Set 3](#)

[Diary Set 4](#)

[Diary Set 5](#)

[Diary Set 6](#)

[Diary Set 7](#)

[Epilogue diary](#)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- **Blank calendars for students: 1938, 1939**
- **Note-taking sheet, timeline handout**
- **Diary sets:** (Approximately 1 year)
 - 1 **1938: March 12, 14, 15, 16, 17–31**
 - 2 **1938: April 1–19, 20, 23, 27, 28,**
 - 3 **1938: April 29–June 30**
 - 4 **1938: July 12, July 31**
 - 5 **1938: November 10, 11** (through p. 20)
 - 6 **1938: December 31, January 31**
 - 7 **1939: April 1–7, 24, 25, 25th cont., 26–30**
- **Epilogue diary entries: Los Angeles, 1939**

PROCEDURE

In this lesson, students will be examining the question:

What aspects of citizenship did the Nazis dismantle in order to control the lives of Jewish citizens?

WARM-UP

If you were to create a timeline of events that have happened to you in the last month, what would you include?

Students use timeline sheet to chart events that occurred in their lives in the past month.

Ask students to share out events from their timeline. Use the discussion to analyze:

- ***Which events had a large impact?
Which had a small impact?***
- ***Which events were in response to outside circumstances?***
- ***Would you say your life is more or less the same as it was last month?***
- ***Would you say your life is very different?
If so, how come?***

MINI-LESSON

Explain that students will be examining the diaries of a man who lived in Austria right before World War II just as Nazi control took over Austria in 1938. (If you choose to, display a map of Western Europe to show where Austria is in relation to Germany). Explain that in 1938 and 1939 events took place very rapidly that dramatically changed the lives for Jews living in Austria and Germany. As historians they will be analyzing the diary entries of one Jewish, Austrian citizen named Adolph Markus to examine how quickly life for Austrian Jewish citizens changed after the Nazi takeover on March 12, 1938. Students will be reading the diary to consider the question:

What aspects of citizenship did the Nazis dismantle in order to control the lives of Jewish citizens?

Explain: We often don't realize how much laws impact our lives.

When we think about the role of our government, we need to remember there are no laws of nature (like gravity or sunlight) that secure our civil and human rights. Laws are made, changed, and enforced by people.

In the context of our lesson today we will be exploring the systematic removal of rights of citizenship for Jews living in Nazi Germany and how that impacted people's daily lives. We will be considering the questions:

Provide a brief background about the Leo Baeck Institute and the 1938 Projekt (see About This Project). These diary entries come from their archives and are part of the project.



Bring up the 1938 Projekt entry for March 11, "Calm Before the Storm". You can choose to show the timeline entry, the German document, and/or the English translation.

WHOLE CLASS

As a class: Read the entry for March 11 "Calm Before the Storm" and observe the diary page. Ask students the sourcing and contextualization questions below. Display student answers somewhere that all students can see them, as the answers will be useful to the students when they engage in group work. You might need to address the fact that Adolph was a very common name at the time the diary was written.

Sourcing Questions

- ***Where did Adolph Markus live?***
- ***What do we know about him?***
- ***When was he writing?***
- ***Who was his audience?***
- ***What is the tone of this entry?***
- ***What is the writer's point of view?***

Contextualizing Questions

- ***What was happening in the world at the time he was writing?***

**WORK PERIOD/
ACTIVITY**

In groups of 3–4 students examine excerpts of Markus’ diary. Each group is responsible for a certain time period in 1938 or 1939. Give each group blank calendars that correspond to their diary entry dates, and each student a note-taking sheet. You can print out the diary excerpts, or students can read them online.

Group Work Directions

- 1 Explain:** You will be reading excerpts from Adolph Markus’ diary and creating the narrative of his journal entries — how quickly did he find himself in a completely different life?
- 2** Give each group a diary set or a link to the excerpts on the Leo Baeck website. Explain that these entries might all take place in one month or span a few months.
- 3** Students will use question prompts to answer to analyze their diary entries:
 - ***What are external events and laws impacting all Jews?***
 - ***What is happening in the life of Adolph Markus?***
 - ***How are non-Jews in his life responding to him and his situation?***
 - ***What are Adolph Markus’ acts of resilience?***
 - ***What is the tone of the diaries?***
- 4** Students will mark blank calendars from 1938 or 1939 with the dates of the journal entries to create a sequence of events.

**STUDENT
WORK GROUPS**

- 1** Students read their excerpts and use the note sheet to chart information on the following themes: 1) External events and laws impacting all Jews; 2) What is happening in the life of Adolph Markus; 3) How he is responding to and feeling in response to these events; 4) How non-Jews in his life are responding to him and his situation; 5) Acts of resilience on his part.
- 2** Students share their information with their small group, and the group charts what they decide are significant events onto their calendars.

3 Whole Group Share: Students share their information to create a larger narrative of Adolph Markus' life. This can be done through several options:

- Draw a large timeline at the front of the room and have student groups add information to form a larger narrative of Markus' life. Discuss as a whole class.
- Student groups chart information on chart paper. Put the charts in chronological order and do a gallery walk looking for themes.
- Each group creates one slide in Google slides to form a class powerpoint presentation. Student groups take turns presenting their slides.

4 Review: How quickly do we see evidence of life changing for Jews? For Adolph Markus? How were non-Jews responding to events? How did Markus respond to events? What were some examples of his resilience? What most surprised you? What struck you?

5 Guide students back to the lesson question. Encourage them to use evidence from the diaries to formulate possible answers to the question:

What aspects of citizenship did the Nazis dismantle in order to control the lives of Jewish citizens?

You may choose to broaden the conversation by using any of these questions:

- ***How and whom do laws protect and what do they provide access to? What happens when those protections are taken away?***
- ***What do Adolph Markus' diaries suggest about the stability or fragility of our political, economic, and social lives?***
- ***What truly are the rights of citizens and from where do these rights stem?***

Students can discuss or write their answers in groups or as a class or independently, or in any combination.

- *Democracy is defined as rule by “the people,” but what does that mean? Who are “the people?” Does that include you and me? What is our role in deciding how we live and what rights we have?*
- *How can we advocate for and protect our rights in the face of systematic and immense opposition?*

WRAP-UP

Inform students that in 1939 Markus and his wife emigrated to Los Angeles and settled there for the remainder of their lives. Alternatively, read excerpts of the diary that describe Markus' life in Los Angeles. It is interesting to consider how freely he is able to do everyday things like take a walk, go to the grocery store, enjoy Christmas lights, as well as apply for citizenship, free of worry.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

What is changing for Jews in Austria after March 12, 1938?

Where do we see evidence of this in the diaries?

- New laws discriminate against the Jews, force them out of work and home, make them feel anxious and terrorized, limit their movements, take their money, put them in prisons
- Non-Jews begin to turn on the Jews by reporting them, or not helping them when they might have before through tacit approval of Nazi actions.

How are these events specifically impacting Adolph Markus and his family?

Things that are compelling are the emotions he describes feeling, his observations and reflections on his changing world.

- He and his family must leave their home, their home is confiscated
- They feel threatened and unsafe walking in the street
- Relatives and neighbors are imprisoned
- They lose their family business
- They are required to identify that they are Jewish
- The family is separated, first in different towns and then by sending away the children
- They are forced to emigrate to the US in order to regain a safe existence

What are some examples of Markus' resilience?

- Signs up for courses that teach him new trades
- Signs up for English language courses
- Confronts Nazi guards who are planting evidence against him
- Sends his children to safety in England

HANDOUT 1

NOTE-TAKING SHEET

As you read your set of diary entries, jot notes on the topics below:

NAME

1 WHAT ARE EXTERNAL EVENTS AND LAWS IMPACTING ALL JEWS?

--	--

DIARY ENTRY DATES

2 WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF ADOLPH MARKUS?

--	--

HANDOUT 1

NOTE-TAKING SHEET

As you read your set of diary entries, jot notes on the topics below:

NAME

3 HOW ARE NON-JEWS IN HIS LIFE RESPONDING TO HIM AND HIS SITUATION?

DIARY ENTRY DATES

4 WHAT ARE ADOLPH MARKUS' ACTS OF RESILIENCE?

HANDOUT 1

NOTE-TAKING SHEET



As you read your set of diary entries,
jot notes on the topics below:

NAME

5 WHAT IS THE TONE OF THE DIARIES?

**DIARY ENTRY
DATES**



HANDOUT 2

BLANK TIMELINE



TITLE

Use this timeline to jot down events that have happened in your life in the past month.



DATE



NAME

