

Elza's story

Listen to the recording of Elza telling her story and then work through the activities below, as instructed by your teacher. (https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/they-always-called-us-by-number-never-by-name-a-survivors-story_EPZo2_EN-A_a)

Objectives

Learn about the concentration camps in World War Two

Learn about life in Auschwitz

Consider the importance of peace in Europe

Extract key information from an extended oral testimony

Understanding the story

1. In which European countries does this story take place?
2. Why were Elza and her aunt Adela arrested?
3. How did the girls feel when they were first told they were going to Auschwitz, and why?
4. How does Elza describe the camp? What does she compare it to?
5. What did Elza notice on the day she left the camp?
6. What did the prisoners' diet look like? What changed at Christmas?
7. Name a happy moment for Elza. What does this teach us?

Vocabulary

1. What do the following words mean? Write a definition in the right-hand column.

Denounce	
Bribe	
Propaganda	

Plead	
Partisan	
Barracks	
Neglected	

2. List some of the adjectives Elza uses to describe the experience of living in Auschwitz. Can you add some more of your own?

Personal reflection – Essay-writing

1. How do you feel after listening to Elza’s story? Discuss your reaction in groups.
2. In your opinion, how did the prisoners manage to survive such an ordeal? What are some of the things that Elza mentions that helped her?
3. How is today’s Europe different from the one Elza knew as an adolescent? Write a brief analysis of 200 words.
4. What inspiration can we take from this story today? Use your answers to the previous questions to write around 250 words. Support your ideas with further examples.
5. Imagine you are Elza and write a diary of 300 words entry describing your daily routine.