

## Interview a Refusenik or Activist

### Introduction

Telling a personal story can often bridge the gap between generations and differing experiences. In this lesson, students connect with a former Refusenik or Soviet Jewry Activist to understand what issues people faced and what motivated people to stand up against injustice.

### Objectives

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- To document personal stories from the Soviet Jewry Movement, both Refuseniks, and Activists
- Develop research skills through documenting an oral history.

<b>Big Ideas</b>	You can make a difference.
<b>Content</b>	To relate the historical events that led to freedom for Soviet Jews.
<b>Skills</b>	To develop research skills
<b>Meaning</b>	To reflect on the power of a common Jewish voice.

### Duration:

- **First Meeting** - Introduce the program and have the students and adult meet each other through ice-breakers. Fill out Part A of the Interview Worksheet.
- **Second meeting** - The adult will begin sharing his/her story with the student. Have the pair continue to investigate (unpack) the Refusenik's story. Use the guiding questions in Part B.
- **Third meeting** - In this class, the story will be transcribed and sent to the teacher. The final product could include a photo taken now or shared with the group.
- **Final meeting** - Pictures and stories will be exhibited and shared.

**Materials:** Interview Form

**Procedure:**

1. Have students fill out the information below.

**Student Information-**

First Name:

Last Name:

School:

Grade:

State:

**Adult Information-**

First Name:

Last Name:

Maiden Name / Previous last name, if changed:

Year of birth:

Country of birth:

City of birth:

Email Address:

## 2. Have your students conduct an interview using the following questions:

- Where were you and how old were you when your story took place? What happened leading up to it? How did you feel?
- Was there someone who helped you along the way? How did they help?
- What was the hardest or scariest part of the story for you? Are there things that are hard to remember?
- What is a fond memory that you have of that time that connects to your story? How was it significant? Does it affect your life today?
- Do you have a specific memory that has impacted your connection to the Jewish people. Why is this memory significant for you?
- When you see examples of injustice today, how does it make you feel? What do you do? Do you have ideas for what I could do?
- Do you have any questions you would like to ask me?
- Consider re-asking any questions you need repeated. Names of people, dates, details that were unclear.
- Is there a photographic documentation of the experience / memory? Scan the pictures. Send them to Mail, the WhatsApp group, or upload to the group site.

## 3. Students should read the topics listed on the chart below. They should highlight 1-3 words which best describe the central themes in their story.

Holidays	Community	Education	History
Identity	Love	Profession	Health
Arts and Culture	Children	Judaism	Home and Family
Names	Volunteering	Childhood	Other:



**4. Create a story:** Student's should write down their story. They should be careful to document as much of the story and mention as many details as possible. This includes: family names, places and dates, etc. If possible, they can include a picture of the person or a picture of the two of them together. They can consider including or highlighting a quote from them that was special or meaningful.