

# Preparation Guide

Peter Feigl's Student Presentation  
Viterbo University  
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**D.B. REINHART  
INSTITUTE**  
*for* ETHICS IN LEADERSHIP

## Purpose

This guide is to help prepare students for Peter Feigl's student presentation. This is a rare opportunity for them to hear a Holocaust survivor. For many students, images of swastikas, Adolph Hitler, and killing centers come to mind when they hear about the Holocaust. They remember the victims in striped uniforms, filthy and emaciated. But these are images the perpetrators wanted to disseminate and preserve. To get the complete story, we must look to those who were targeted and learn their story. When students hear and see a Holocaust survivor, that face, that name, and that story become the focal point of their memory. Indeed, what an honor it will be for your students to meet Peter Feigl.

As each classroom and curriculum is unique, teachers will need to evaluate where students are in their understanding of the Holocaust and select the resources which best meet the learning goals of the class and the needs of their students when preparing them for the visit.

## Providing Historical Context

The Holocaust is a complex topic. Teaching about it requires sensitivity and awareness of the complexity. Providing students with background knowledge of the Holocaust sets the stage for the survivor story. It helps students understand the social, economic, political, and religious events of the time and how they influenced the actions of people. Without an understanding of the historical context surrounding the time period, the survivor's story, will have less meaning for the students.

For students with little background on the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's thirty-eight-minute film, [Path to Nazi Genocide](#) is an excellent resource. The film provides a chronology of the Holocaust beginning with the aftermath of WWI and Jewish life, the Nazi rise to power, persecution of the Jews, and WWII and the Holocaust. There is also a [discussion guide](#) with questions for use with the film.

**NOTE:** As with any film, it is important to preview this film prior to showing to students. The museum states: *This film contains difficult subject matter and imagery. Some segments may not be appropriate for younger audiences.*

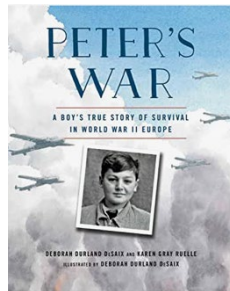
If you prefer to have students read about the Holocaust to provide background knowledge, the Holocaust Encyclopedia has a lengthy article entitled [Introduction to the Holocaust](#). This article can be assigned to students independently or in groups and can be read online or PDF copies can be made.

## Background on Peter Feigl

It is also beneficial to provide students with background information on Mr. Feigl prior to hearing him speak. This will allow students to place his story within the historical context they are familiar with and let them focus on his individual story. In addition, it will help engage them in his story and think about questions they would like to have answered.

This [slide presentation](#) and accompanying [script](#) introduces Peter Feigl to students through photos, maps, and details about his time during the Holocaust. It is designed for a whole class presentation lead by the teacher and should allow opportunities for students to ask questions and discuss items of importance to them.

Students can also read about Peter in preparation for his presentation. They can read a short [biography](#) from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, as well as his diary published in Alexandra Zapruder's, *Salvaged Pages*. A recent picture book, *Peter's War* by Deborah Durland DeSaix and Karen Gray Ruelle, also tells Peter's story.



## Preparing for the Presentation

After students have gained some background on Peter, guide them in generating questions to ask him as there will be an opportunity at the end for questions.

This can be done individually, in small groups, or as a whole class activity. After all questions have been created, narrow them down to one or two the class as a whole really wants to have answered. Consider selecting a spokesperson or two who will ask one question at the end of the lecture. Remind students there will be other classes in attendance and some questions may not be answered due to time.

Additionally, encourage students to listen for answers to their questions throughout the presentation so as not to ask something that has already been answered.

Remind students to be respectful of the speaker and of your expectations for their behavior and attention.

## After the Presentation

Hearing a Holocaust survivor is very moving, and it is just as important to support students after the experience as it is before. Students need time to reflect and process what they witnessed. Make sure to provide an opportunity for them to discuss their feelings, ask additional questions, and ponder what they could or should do in response. This can be done orally or through writing.

Finally, have students write a thank you note to Mr. Feigl. This simple act of appreciation will honor Mr. Feigl for sharing his story, a story that will forever remain with students.

You can send the thank you notes to:

Mr. Peter Feigl  
3114 Gracefield Road  
Apartment 205  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904