

White Rose Student Essay Contest



2016-2017 Theme:

Jewish Resistance in the Ghettos



The enormity of the Holocaust was such that no victim response to it would have stopped the Germans from implementing genocide. Jews under Nazi control faced various and overwhelming obstacles to effective resistance. Despite this, Jews repeatedly sought to oppose Nazi policy in various ways. While armed uprisings or partisan activities are often held up as examples of successful Jewish resistance, not all resistance was armed. Often the only course of action available was an act of unarmed resistance.

Successful acts of resistance took many forms, ranging from personal acts to preserve dignity; social acts to preserve the community such as organizing clandestine schools, soup kitchens and underground record keeping; political acts such as the sabotage of the German war industry; and eventually, armed uprisings. Nowhere was resistance more robust than in the ghettos where Jews last lived as families and communities and resistance activities occurred amidst extreme conditions and against enormous odds.

RESEARCH

Describe the goals and obstacles to one specific form of Jewish resistance in the ghettos. Explain how that method was used by one Jewish person or group.

REFLECTION

Holocaust historian Lucy Dawidowicz said, “The wonder is not that there was so little resistance, but that, in the end, there was so much.” Based on your research, do you agree with this thought? Why or why not?

Postmark entry deadline – March 23, 2017

For complete details, including required sources for student research, criteria, entry forms, and recommended teaching approaches, visit

mchekc.org/essay