

# Choosing to Resist

The following are potential ideas that students might come up with in the brainstorming session of the exercise. This is not a comprehensive list, but offers you and your student some possible answers.

What is resistance is a session for the entire class. The remaining three topics should be worked on individually or in small groups then brought back to the larger class to discuss and revise as per the lesson plan instructions.

## What is resistance?

### 1. Spiritual Resistance

- a. Working to stay alive – maintaining will to live
- b. Helping a friend – lifting someone else’s moral
- c. Small actions to feel human
  - i. Grooming, cleaning
  - ii. “tailoring” clothes
  - iii. Giving a gift
- d. Still believing in God and practicing your religion
- e. Singing/writing/documenting the experience
- f. Keeping something of emotional value to you (picture, trinket, etc.)
- g. Teaching children (academic or religious)

### 2. Active Resistance

- a. Sabotage – especially in slave labor facilities in ghettos and camps
- b. Getting information to the underground
- c. Smuggling – food or other valuables
- d. Collecting arms
- e. Making contacts with non-Jews
- f. Printing underground newspapers or leaflets
- g. Physically fighting back – usually with the knowledge that they would not live and were “choosing how to die”

## What does it take to make the decision to emigrate?

### 1. Money

- a. Certain amount required to be allowed into the receiving country
- b. Forced to leave a certain amount in Germany
- c. Necessary to pay bribes
- d. Purchase false papers

### 2. a place to go

### 3. necessary papers

### 4. willingness to leave

- a. leaving home – remember there is strong nationalism at this time
- b. leaving career/livelihood
- c. language barriers to moving
- d. who in the family is going/who is staying

### 5. foresight!

**Option ends 9/1/39 with beginning of war  
Nazi policy shifts from emigration, but not  
immediately to murder**

### **What does it take to make the decision to choose to hide?**

1. Money
  - a. Pay bribes
  - b. Buy black market food
2. A place to go
  - a. Secure location
  - b. Access to water, food, air, other necessities
3. patience
  - a. boredom
  - b. confined spaces
  - c. getting along with others in hiding
4. Person or group of people to help
  - a. Must buy food in times of rationing
  - b. Medical care
  - c. Assuming personal danger for harboring Jews
5. ability to be proactive in rescue
6. foresight

**Option occurs in the context of occupation (dates differ by country)**

**Do you wait until you are under direct threat or do you act preemptively?**

### **What does it take to mount an armed resistance?**

1. leaders
2. contacts with national underground or partisan groups
3. money
  - a. pay bribes
  - b. acquire false papers
  - c. purchase weapons
4. willingness to die personally
5. willingness for others to die because of collective responsibility
6. ability to hold up under torture
7. weapons and knowledge to use them
8. tactical planning
9. belief in the value of what you are doing
10. rallying point across political groups

\*Most resistors were young and politically active.

\* Many women worked in resistance movements.

**Option occurs at “the end” when situation seems most desperate – this can be in a ghetto or in a camp**

**“Playing for time” – not necessarily expecting to live but to determine how and when they die**

**Obstacles to the decision: collective responsibility – Nazis murder large numbers in retribution. Serves as a powerful deterrent.**