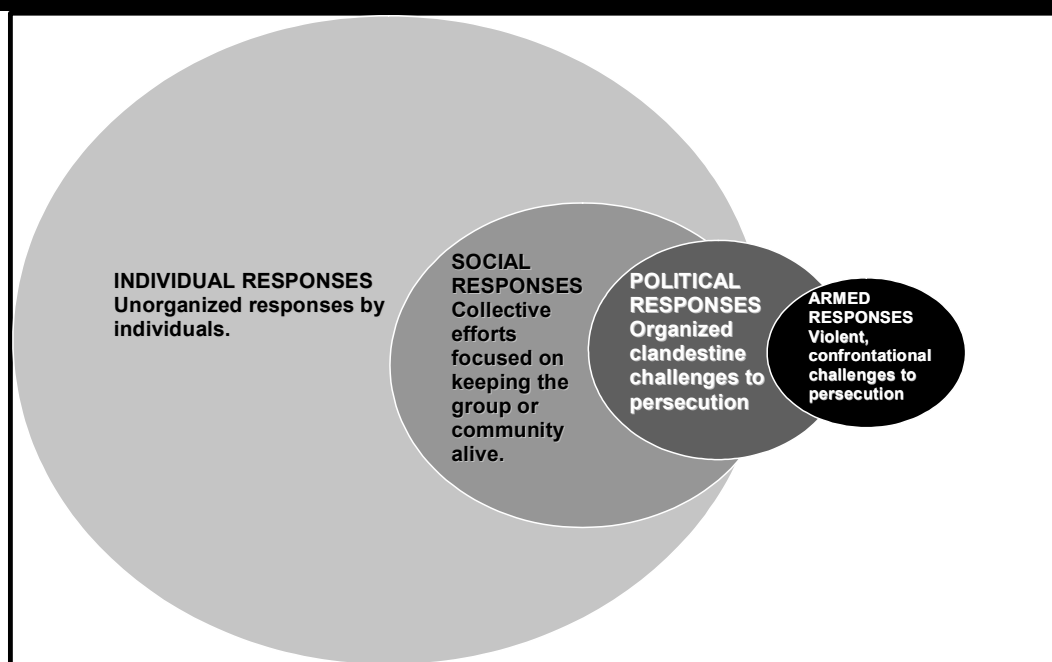


Jewish Responses to the Holocaust

Jewish responses to the Holocaust are best described as “choiceless choices.” They were put in positions to make judgements and decisions without there being real, viable alternatives to their situation. Despite this, many decisions were made and responses generally fell into the categories below.



Lesson Plan:

Run copies of each of the following:

- MCHE Worksheet “Jewish Responses to the Holocaust”
- Primary Source Documents
 - ⇒ *Scroll of Agony* by Chaim Kaplan. Pages 242-245
 - ⇒ *Smoke over Birkenau* by Liana Millu. Pages 13-19
 - ⇒ Bialystock Resistance Debate in *Documents on the Holocaust* by Yitzhak Arad. Pages 296-301
 - ⇒ *Five Chimneys* by Olga Lengyl. Pages 11-15

Instructions for Classroom Exercise:

1. Discuss with students the different categories of potential Jewish responses to the Holocaust.
 - Individual – Unorganized responses by individuals
 - Social – Collective efforts focused on keeping the community or group alive
 - Political – Organized clandestine challenges to persecution
 - Armed – Violent, confrontational challenges to persecution
2. In light of that discussion, have students read the above excerpts and answer the corresponding questions on the student worksheet.

Special Notes for Teachers:

This exercise is designed to meet state standards for using primary source documents and answering document based questions and the USHMM guideline for personalizing the history.