



Voices could be gathered by writing them down or making an audio or video recording.

Eye-witness statements can be powerful evidence of what happened in the past.



We are going to listen to a gathered voice.



Whose will it be?

**You are going to listen to
the story of a young girl
whose voice was gathered
when she was an old
woman.**

Her name is Gretl.

Gretl Marle was born in 1924 in Vienna, the capital city of Austria





Here she is with her brother in 1927

She travelled to London in June 1939 when she was just 14 years old, leaving her parents behind in Austria.





**Gretl was immediately put on a train to Coventry where she stayed with people she had never met before.
She could not speak any English.**

She moved to Glasgow in Scotland in 1950 when she was 26 years old and spent the rest of her life there.





**This is Gretl
on her 80th
birthday,
six years before
her death in
2012.**

**Why do you think
Gretl's voice has been gathered?**

What events do you think she might have witnessed in her lifetime that were important enough that someone would want to record them, many years after they happened?

Who was Gretl?

- Create a life for Gretl.
- Think about the clues you have been given.
- Research what life was like in Austria in the 1930s.
- What was happening in London?
- Create a time line from 1930-1950 and include any important dates from your research.



**Now listen to
her testimony**



INT: How did you come here (in Scotland)?

G.S: I came with a children's transport which was arranged by the Quakers, the 'Society of Friends'

INT: And where had you come from?

G.S: I had come from Vienna

INT: Why had your parents allowed you to come?

G.S: Well, they could see no future for me. They were frightened of what would happen to me and they themselves couldn't get out. And they sent all their children - three children.

INT: Did you know what was happening to you?

G.S: Well, not clearly. I mean, I thought I would see my parents again. I knew I was going to someone I had never seen before but my parents had communicated by letter to the lady, and I knew I was going to a good home but I didn't know where.

- How do you think Gretl's parents felt when they decided to send her away?
- Create an image of the expression on Gretl's face when her parents told her she was to go away.
- Use only pencil or charcoal.
- How would you feel?
- Create a drama of their conversation.



INT: Can you understand how it must have felt for your mother?

G.S: Well, I think she must have felt absolutely awful. I mean, she, three children you know, disappearing. And she obviously knew that she'd never see them again. Well, it must have been dreadful, dreadful for her.

INT: Were you aware, when you were younger and before you left home of other families being parted in this way?

G.S: Yes, yes. You know, there was a general exodus. They. most people tried to get their children out even if they couldn't get themselves out, they tried to get the children going. And, I must say, the British government was quite good about that, at that time. They did take in a lot of children.

- Why do you think Gretl's mother 'obviously' knew she would never see her daughter again?
- Why do you think the British Government took in a lot of children at that time?
- Think about the children who were evacuated from British cities during the war. How did their experience compare to Gretl's. What were the differences and similarities?



INT: Were you scared that it was going to happen to you when you saw other children having to leave home?

G.S: Yes, and, in a way I sound selfish but I was glad that I had the chance of leaving because I saw such terrible things. You know, I remember coming home from school and seeing an old man having to scrub the floor, the pavement and a whole lot of brownshirts, you know the Nazis, standing round poking him with rifles and oh everybody laughing and jeering. I mean this sort of thing happened and it was, you know, frightening - it was terrible.

- Do you think Gretl sounded selfish?
- Write a short account of what Gretl witnessed on her way home from school. Include what she saw, how she felt and what she may have thought about the people watching.
- Look back at the image you created of Gretl. What do you think she is thinking now?
- Add colour to show how she felt inside as she left Vienna for London.



INT: When you had to move schools were you aware that the kids who were not Jewish were sorry for you?

Or were they pleased you were being humiliated in this way do you think? Had they been indoctrinated by the regime?

G.S: I don't think that we, you know, that we had anything more to do with them really. We were just whisked off and that was it. I don't know what the reaction really was. We had a lot of non-Jewish friends and I don't really know what the reaction of the children was. I think we had so many worries, I think that was the least of our worries! Whether they would play with us, I don't know. I think most of the time my mother would keep us in anyway by then, you know because she would be frightened of what they might say.

- Why do you think Gretl had to move schools while she was still living in Vienna?

- Why did Gretl think that other people's reactions 'the least of our worries?'

INT: Were you aware then, I mean you say you saw this old man scrubbing the pavement, were you aware of the attacks on Jews?

G.S: Oh yes, yes, yes. The thing was that my family didn't really look Jewish and we didn't have a Jewish name, I was called Marle. and so I wasn't so obviously Jewish but anybody who faintly looked Jewish was attacked. You could walk down the street and have people attacking you, jeering.

INT: Physically attacking?

G.S: Yes, yes. Spitting at you and that kind of thing.

INT: And you remember that very clearly?

G.S: Oh yes, yes.

- Why do you think the interviewer asked Gretl if she remembered these events ‘very clearly’?
- How do we know what happened in the past? History is based sources of information, some more reliable than others. Sources of information can be primary or secondary – find out what this means.
- Think of what you have learned about
- How do you know it is true?



- Think of a recent event in your own life or one you may have seen in the media.
- Give some examples of primary and secondary sources of information about it. Which are the most reliable?
- Do you think Gretl's testimony reliable? Why?



INT: These were just ordinary people, not soldiers- not brownshirts?

G.S: No, no. You see, I've always had this feeling. Now they pretend they, they were good people but they weren't. There were very few, the few that were ended up in concentration camps like everybody else. If there were some Catholics who were good and helped some Jews or protested - they were whisked off as well! You know, they. I don't think there were so many who weren't Nazis.

- **Why do you think there were very few ‘good’ people?**
- **Make a list of the qualities these good people would had?**
- **Create an image of a candle burning in the darkness to illustrate the light these qualities still bring to even the darkest of days. Where in the world do you think today?**
- **This light needs to shine**

INT: Do you think a lot of them just joined in because they were scared not to?

G.S: Well there must have been some who did that but some enjoyed it. I mean if you, for instance, we had to leave our flat because it was a council flat we lived in. And, so we had to leave it as soon as the Nazis came and somebody moved in. Well they would be pleased - they wouldn't worry about us. We had to leave all our furniture, piano - everything was left. We just had to leave. It wasn't a question of 'would you mind going out?', we were told 'You must leave this house by tomorrow or in the middle of the night..' whatever. You see.

- What do you think Gretl and her brother would have missed most when they had to move out of their flat?
- What do you think was the most valuable thing they were able to bring with them?
- Make a list of 5 items you would bring with you on a journey. Could the destination make a difference to what you would bring? Would the length of time before you returned make a difference?
- What if you knew you might never return?



- We know about Gretl's history because she has told us what happened to her.
- Do you know anyone who could tell you about an event they witnessed?
- Think about the questions you might need to ask.
- Could you gather their voice?
- Record their testimony and save it in an archive?





What do you think about this image now?



What do you think history now?



**Find out more at
www.gatheringthevoices.com**