

The Kindertransport:
How Kristallnacht Inspired Britain's Immigration Policies

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Immigration has always been important to me because my own parents are immigrants. People migrate for various reasons, including seeking refuge, asylum, and improving their quality of life. In America, the topic of immigration is more prevalent than ever, given the current political state. At the start of this project, I knew I wanted to do a topic that focused on immigration. Eventually, I came across Kristallnacht, a riot that took place in November, 1938. Nazis went around destroying Jewish businesses, homes, and synagogues, killing many in the process. This led me to the Kindertransport, a rescue effort supported by primarily donations that saved thousands of Jewish children from Nazi persecution. This year, the Kindertransport fits the theme as it was a reaction to Kristallnacht, and it led to the British government reforming their strict immigration policies.

I began my research with a book called *Kristallnacht: Nazi Persecution of the Jews in Europe* by Wil Mara. It detailed how different countries reacted to the events of Kristallnacht. This is where I learned of Britain's role and how they initiated the Kindertransport. Additionally, I used databases and archives like JSTOR and the National Archives (United Kingdoms) to find primary and secondary sources. One of these sources was a letter to a British politician. It discussed the writer's concern for the well-being and education of Jewish children in Germany, proving useful in the reaction portion of my project. My teachers helped me as well. One of them introduced me to a documentary named *50 Children: The Rescue Mission of Mr. and Mrs. Kraus*, which discussed a lesser-known Kindertransport mission in Philadelphia. This was vital in helping me prove the importance of the Kindertransport, and how it influenced many other rescue efforts.

In order to build my website, I created the layout and main structure of my project, which was essentially all the backgrounds, fonts, colors, and overall theme. I used red for most of my

website because it is often associated with war and struggle. I gathered all the images and text I wanted to use and put them into a separate Google Doc to organize them in one place. Finally, I added all the images, information, and headings to my website.

The Kindertransport occurred during 1938, at a time when immigration in Europe, particularly Jewish immigration, was discouraged. The transport shines light on the importance of immigration. Because Britain reacted to Kristallnacht when many countries shut their doors, it caused reform in Britain's immigration policies that led to 10,000 Jewish children being rescued from persecution and granted the chance at a better life. Still, the Kindertransport had its faults. Immigration did not promise a perfect life, and many refugees faced hardships. However, even after 1939, when the transport ended and World War II began, Britain still continued to enact policies that helped the children who were brought over. The Kindertransport is highly important as it is used as a way to inspire and advocate for immigration and refugees.