

Personal Narrative – Kurt Fuchel

Kurt Fuchel was born in Vienna Austria. This is part of his story about the Kindertransport. The first two excerpts take place while Kurt is still in Vienna with his parents.

“Times are bad,” Mutti (Mother) says. Papa doesn’t go to work any more, and he doesn’t talk much. He plays with me, but he doesn’t smile. I ask, “What is the matter? Was I bad? Did I make too much noise?” Papa tells me, “Times are bad, but it will pass.”

**Kurt Fuchel, “Vienna, 1938: A Child’s View,” Voices of the Kinder, Kindertransport Association (KTA),n.d.,
<http://www.kindertransport.org/memoirs/memoir-fuchel-02.html>
(April 30, 2012)**

One day Papa tells me that we are going to move again, but not together. He and Mutti will put me on a train and some nice people will meet me in a place called England, and I will stay with them for a short time and then he and Mutti will come for me. I like trains, but I ask, “Who will look after me, who will tell me where to get off, and why can’t we all go together? Papa picks me up and puts me on his knee. He says, “This is how it must be, and you have to be a good boy and do what the ladies on the train tell you to do. You’re not a baby any more, but a big boy of seven.”

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Although many of the children who took part in the Kindertransports would never see their parents again, Kurt was one of the lucky ones. They had escaped Austria to Italy then to France, but because of immigration restrictions were not able to make it to England. Kurt and his parents were able to exchange letters for a time until his parents were forced to go into hiding. When the war ended Kurt was 14, he had two years left in school and as much as his parents wanted him back, they decided he should stay in England to finish school. This would also give his parents time to get themselves settled. Below is an excerpt about Kurt's first meeting with his parents. Parents he hadn't seen in 8 years. This meeting was in Paris, France

I didn't want to go....we went to dinner in a restaurant and I remember it was difficult because I didn't speak German or French and they spoke very little English. I had the Cohens on one side, my parents on the other, I felt caught in the middle.

Byers, Ann. *Saving children from the Holocaust: the Kindertransport*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, 2012. Print.

Kurt did move to Paris to live with his parents. They stayed in France until 1956 when they immigrated to the United States.



These are images of some of the children from the Kindertransport, a memorial in Harwich, England and a map of one of the routes the trains took. Based on what you have read, discussed and viewed here, how do you think it would feel to have to leave home and your family to travel to another country, not knowing when you could see your parents again? Look at the questions on the board and include them in your response.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Activity Sheet – Kindertransports Group 2 Name _____

Before reading this transcript, Read the article on Kindertransports and answer the following questions. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005260>

1. What were the Kindertransports? _____

2. When did they happen? _____
3. What event prompted the British government to ease immigration restrictions to allow the children to come to Britain? _____
4. Who had to guarantee to pay for the children's care? _____

5. Where did the children stay? _____

6. How many children were sent to Britain? _____
7. What happened to the children after the war? _____

After reading Kurt Fuchel's story complete the following.

1. What impact did the war seem to have on him?

2. What countries did this Kurt and his parents go through before, during and after the war?

3. In Kurt's last excerpt he says he felt caught in the middle. Why do you think that was the case?

4. What questions would you have for Kurt if you were able to speak with him?
