

documentED – at a glance

Toolkits for preparing and following up on trips to memorial sites

Research-based learning with documents from the Arolsen Archives

Individual fates lead on to the broader context of National Socialist persecution

Speedy acquisition of the prior knowledge students need

A wide range of toolkits focusing on various concentration camp memorial sites and individual prisoners

Customized toolkits (with a connection to the place where you live, for example) are available on request

Ideas for creative commemorative projects to follow up on a visit to a memorial

Multilingual (including German, English, and Polish)

Toolkits are available free of charge at: aroa.to/docu-toolkits-en

The Arolsen Archives are an international center on Nazi persecution with the world's most comprehensive archive on the victims and survivors of National Socialism. The collection has information on about 17.5 million people and belongs to UNESCO's Memory of the World. It contains documents on the various victim groups targeted by the Nazi regime and is an important source of knowledge, especially for younger generations.

The Arolsen Archives are funded by:



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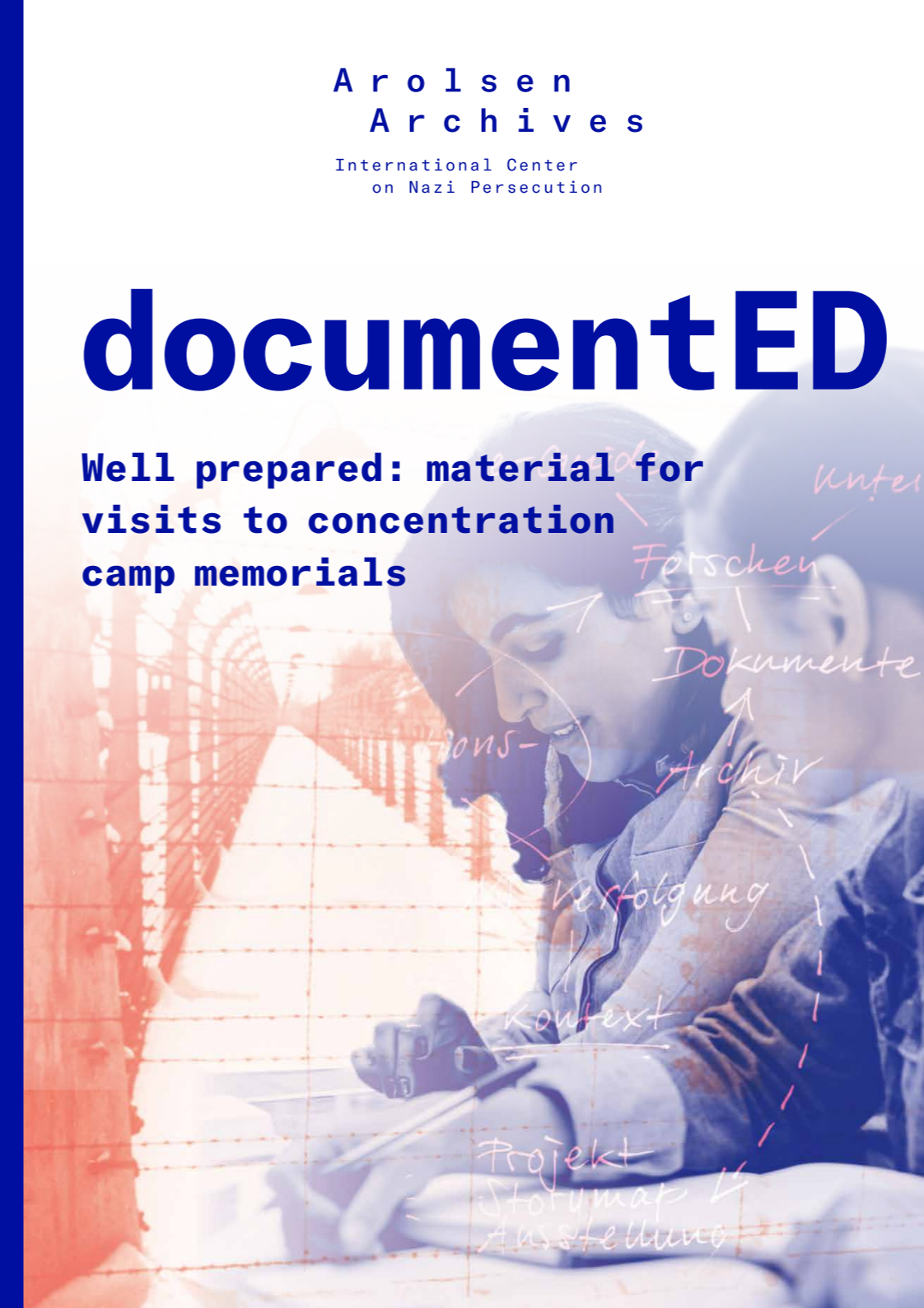
documentED

Well prepared: material for visits to concentration camp memorials



When schoolchildren study documents from the Nazi era and learn about the personal fates of concentration camp inmates as part of the documentED project, the horror of the Holocaust becomes more comprehensible. documentED not only encourages empathy, but also makes the memory of the Shoah more tangible. The project also helps immunize young people against antisemitism, racism, and hatred.«

Dr. Josef Schuster,
President of the Central Council
of Jews in Germany





The Arolsen Archives support educators is by providing materials for trips to memorial sites. Packages of learning materials (toolkits) dedicated to the fate of individual concentration camp prisoners from various camps are the central element of documentED.

Many young people today do not know much about Nazi persecution, despite the fact that learning about National Socialism is firmly anchored in school curricula in Germany and many other countries. Studies show that even those students who visit memorials on the sites of former concentration camps often remember little about it afterwards.

The stories of the victims of Nazi persecution must be told – over and over again. This is the only way to ensure that they are passed on to coming generations and the only way to ensure that this knowledge is kept alive.

Developed in partnership with experts

documentED has been developed on the basis of feedback from teachers and in partnership with various concentration camp memorial sites and educational institutions outside the formal education system. The Buchenwald, Mittelbau-Dora, and Dachau concentration camp memorials and the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau were all involved in the comprehensive test phase.

»The earlier we acquaint children of different ages with the existence of these files and their contents, the easier it will be to teach the history of the Holocaust and other mass killings. Every new generation of children must be familiarized with this terrible past and its horrendous consequences.«

Thomas Buergenthal, Holocaust survivor



Before you visit a memorial Research-based learning with documents from concentration camps

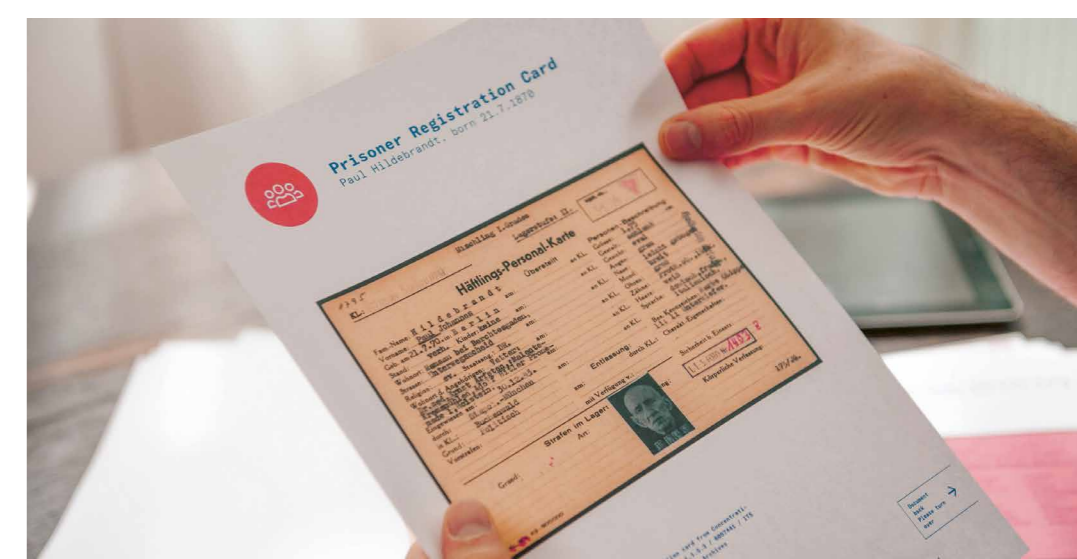
documentED offers packages of learning materials (toolkits) for visits to various concentration camp memorials in Germany and other countries. You can download them free of charge (several languages are available): aroa.to/docu-toolkits-en

The toolkits include selected documents from the Arolsen Archives, these are primarily documents that were produced by the Nazis for registering prisoners in the concentration camp in question. Working with these source materials ensures that students are better equipped with previous knowledge when they visit the memorial. We provide information for teachers on how to use the toolkit in the classroom and include examples of work assignments.

Dealing with sources critically

documentED uses individual fates to lead on to an understanding of the broader context. Why did the National Socialists imprison people? What function did the concentration camps have, and how were they organized within the Nazi system of terror?

The Arolsen Archives also provide a useful tool to help students better understand sources like prisoner registration cards and personal effects cards: the e-Guide. This online resource uses illustrations and interactive elements to explain the documents on concentration camp prisoners. The e-Guide provides easy access to a wealth of knowledge and is also available in a mobile version for smartphones and tablets. The worksheets in the toolkits include links to the relevant documents in the e-Guide so that students can access background information quickly.



After you visit a memorial Ideas for projects of your own

Giving young people the freedom to be creative has a positive impact on learning. It is just as important to encourage groups to plan a project of their own after visiting a memorial as it is to give them adequate preparation before the trip. This is why documentED also includes suggestions for getting actively involved and taking a stand. Manageable and doable – these are the watchwords. Social media and digital formats offer plenty of possibilities nowadays, but a traditional »analog« poster exhibition can also be a good idea. There are many other options too, of course, including more elaborate creative projects for after-school clubs, for example. If you send us photos, audio files, or videos, we are happy to present the final results of your documentED projects on our website and share them on our social media channels too.

Relating learning to life

Because of the sheer number of documents on individual victims of Nazi persecution that are held in the Arolsen Archives, it is often possible to introduce an aspect which students can relate to directly. Documents about concentration camp inmates who came from the same town or region as the group or who were about the same age as them when they were imprisoned are very helpful here.

Students can then establish a direct connection between the things they are learning about and the circumstances of their own lives. This approach often inspires students to take a deeper interest in the topic as it makes the abstract facts in history books easier to grasp. If you are interested in receiving a customized toolkit, please contact us at historical-research@arolsen-archives.org.