



Author Biography Activity

MARIE DODUCK



RE:COLLECTION

Exploring the history of the Holocaust through
first-hand accounts of survivors

On Re:Collection, you will find:

- Video interviews
- Memoir excerpts
- Photos
- Artifacts



ACCESS

[Re:Collection](#)



EXPLORE

Re:Collection

BY SURVIVOR

- On the menu, select "Survivors."
- Select the name of a survivor.
- Click on a circle on the page to launch a recollection.

BY THEME

- On the menu, select "Themes."
- Select a theme.
- Click on a circle on the page to launch a recollection.



TIP

- The [i] icon gives you access to further information (biography, glossary, etc.).
- The "My Collection" tab lets you register to collect recollections and view a personalized map and timeline.



VIDEO HOW TO USE

[Re:Collection](#)



CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

**LENGTH**

1–2 class periods (90–120 minutes)

**AGE APPROPRIATENESS**

14+

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will engage with survivor testimony and develop media literacy by researching a survivor's story on the digital resource Re:Collection. They will learn about Marie Doduck's Holocaust experience and understand its impact on her life.

**MATERIAL REQUIRED**

- An internet-enabled computer or tablet

MAP



BACKGROUND READING



Marie in Vancouver, circa 1951.

Marie Doduck is a Holocaust survivor who immigrated to Canada after the war and settled in Vancouver. You can learn about her experiences by reading her memoir, *A Childhood Unspoken*, or by accessing the digital resource Re:Collection.

Below is some background that will help you understand Marie's story.

BIOGRAPHY:

Marie (Mariette) Doduck was born on May 10, 1935, in Brussels, Belgium, as the youngest of eleven children. She grew up in an Orthodox Jewish household, and her parents owned a small grocery store that catered to Polish and Jewish immigrants. When her father passed away in 1938, her mother was left alone to raise the eight youngest children and run the family business.

On Marie's fifth birthday, Germany invaded Belgium. Several of Marie's siblings, as well as her mother, were eventually deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, and Marie and her other siblings had to go into hiding to avoid persecution. Between 1941 and 1945 Marie hid with many Catholic families, in a convent and in an orphanage.

After the war, in 1947, Marie and three of her siblings immigrated to Canada on board the RMS *Aquitania* as part of the War Orphans Project. After landing at Pier 21 in Halifax, she made her way by train to Vancouver. There, Marie married and raised three children.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

Mariette's family lived in **Belgium**, a small country in Western Europe between France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany. At the onset of the war, Belgium's Jewish population numbered approximately 70,000. Most had immigrated to Belgium after World War I, and some had fled persecution in neighbouring countries in the 1930s; as a result, less than 10 per cent had Belgian citizenship. With the Nazi Party's rise to power in Germany in **1933**, Belgian Jews were confronted with growing **antisemitism**.

Shortly after Germany invaded Belgium in May **1940**, living conditions for Belgian Jews significantly deteriorated: they were excluded from certain professions and public education, subjected to forced labour and, by **1942**, forced to wear the yellow star.

Between **1942** and **1944**, the German authorities interned Jews in camps and deported almost 25,000 to **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, a death camp. Allied troops, including some Canadian regiments, liberated Belgium between September **1944** and February **1945**. Approximately **23,000** Jews who lived in Belgium were killed in the Holocaust.

“Eventually I forgot to eat; I got so used to being hungry that I was not aware of it. But I remember the taste of fear very well.”

Marie Doduck

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY ACTIVITY

- Read Marie's biography and historical context on page 4 of this booklet.
- Browse Marie's recollections. You'll find video interviews, excerpts, photographs and more.
- Use the information gathered to answer the following questions.

1. Marie, born in 19____ in _____, Belgium, was part of a big family. She was the youngest of _____ children.

2. During the German occupation, all Belgian Jews were asked to register with the authorities. Marie's mother registers her family in December _____. Why was Marie's brother angry at their mother for doing this?



HINT: You can find additional information about each recollection, including location, date and glossary terms, by tapping or clicking More Info.

3. Why did Marie's mother have to repeatedly sew the yellow star back onto Marie's clothes?

4. Marie's brother _____ decides that she should go into hiding. Why did he tell Marie not to remember names, addresses and other personal details?

5. Why didn't Marie celebrate her birthday for a long time?

6. Marie's brother Henri was part of the Belgian resistance movement. His code name was _____. What are some of the survival skills Henri taught Marie?

7. Where did the Mother Superior hide Marie when the Gestapo came looking for her?

8. After the war ended, Marie was reunited with one of her siblings. Who came to get Marie at the orphanage, and why did Marie run away from them?

9. Marie and three of her siblings came to Canada on board the RMS _____. After settling in Vancouver, Marie found it difficult to adjust to her new reality. Why was it hard for Marie to form new relationships?

10. Marie sees herself as two people. What is the difference between Mariette and Marie?

