

RUTH GRUBER: WITNESS FOR THE WORLD

Student worksheet

Directions:

- Find a partner to work with. Using your laptop go to <http://www.americanphotomag.com/ruth-gruber-witness-world> or use the handout to read the article written by Ruth Gruber on September 28, 2012.
- You and your partner will take turns reading the article aloud so that you may "hear" Ruth Gruber's voice.
- Pay close attention to the pictures and the captions written below them.

Answer the questions below. First discuss your findings with your partner. Be prepared to discuss with the whole group.

- How old was Ruth Gruber when she wrote this article? *101* (Ruth Gruber passed away in 2016. How old was she when she passed away? - *She was 105*)
- What can you tell from her personality by "hearing" her voice? *answers will vary but may include : she is adventurous, she is concerned with the welfare of others, she is a "doer", she is still engaged in current events (she talks about offshore drilling being a problem today), she is independent, etc.*
- What philosophy seems to have shaped her life? *answers may vary but may include the following: "Did you take a course?" Who took courses? You just learned by doing. The camera taught me." or 'Take pictures with your heart.' or (regarding her pictures): "They don't belong to you. They don't belong to the *Herald Tribune*. They belong to the world." And that's the way I looked at them after that.*
How did she use that philosophy in her photojournalism? *answers will vary - but should refer to how she followed her own path, how she brought issues to the world through her photos etc.*
- What do you think of this philosophy? Is there a time when you were influenced by that thinking? Share with your partner. What philosophy do you think you follow?
- Did Ruth Gruber use a "Jewish Lens" in her work? *answers will vary -but should include her work on the *Henry Gibbons, the Exodus and the Runnymede Park*. What do you think Harold Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior meant when he said to Ruth, "I was wrong. You must go. You owe it to your people. *answers may vary but can include the idea that being Jewish means that she has a larger moral obligation than just working for her boss.**
Do you think being Jewish gave Ruth Gruber a different perspective about moral obligation? *answers will vary*
- Ruth Gruber says, "The more I wrote, the better the pictures were. The more I took images, the better the writing was. The two interlock so beautifully." How does this describe photojournalism? *answers will vary* What do you think about her photojournaling? *answers will vary but may include the meaning behind the title of the article.* She says that the picture on the Runnymede was her most famous picture. Why do you think she believed this? *answers will vary* What is the most important picture that you have seen?
- If you could ask Ruth Gruber any questions, what would it be and why?
- You will be photojournaling for this class. What will you take from Ruth Gruber's story as you begin to look at the world with a Jewish Lens?