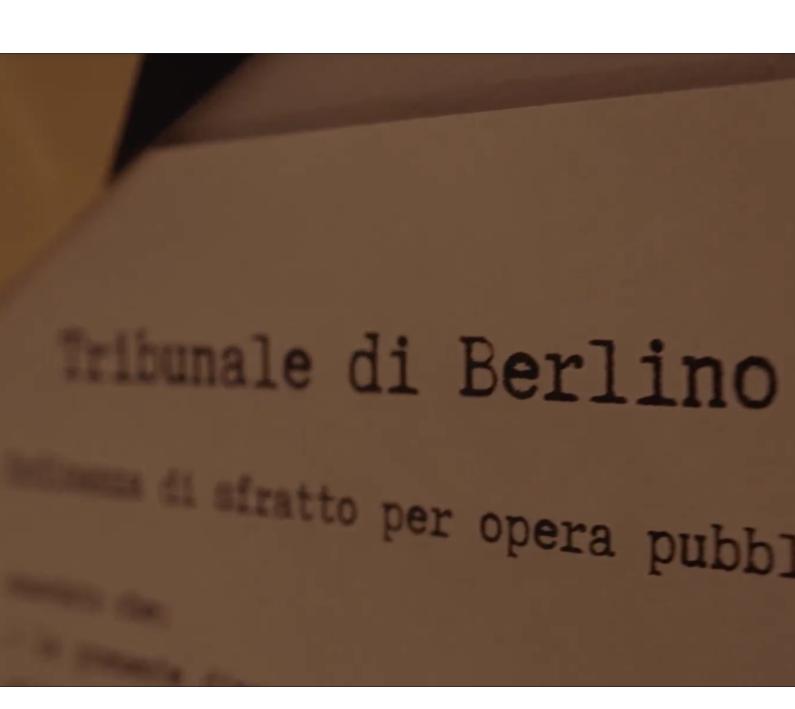




No Borders

ESCAPE ROOM GUIDE

Escape Racism: Toolbox to Promote Inclusive Communities







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Introduction

No Borders is an Escape Room created within the Erasmus+ project "Escape Racism", which aims to fight discrimination and racism through educational game. Specifically, No Borders deals with borders and highlights the issues related to barriers in the world, with particular reference to the importance of historical memory to avoid making the same mistakes as in the past.

Using the Berlin Wall as a historical metaphor, the narrative leads the player to recognise the evidence of the problem, which is still widespread on all continents, and to draw parallels between the two situations.





Narratives

Monika lived in her Berlin home for many years, living the Wall on her own skin from its construction to its fall. Separated from Heinz, a boy with whom she was in love, after a period of despair she began to investigate the reality of East Berlin and then of walls throughout the contemporary world. Her research is collected in a diary and various documents and has been left in the house so that it becomes a museum.

The players, Monika's grandchildren, return to Berlin years later to prevent the German municipality from demolishing their now uninhabited house. Only once inside they will discover the extraordinary story of their grandmother and the Berlin Wall.

For a detailed description of the story to welcome groups, see 'How to play the game'.







Required Materials

- 5x Old thick books (500+ pages)
- 1x Closed cabinet with doors
- Rope, cord
- This printed material:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/10wZX 7ScEsYZ-5mhBUiQXnXHe08tpBJb

- 5x Wooden pegs
- 2x Alphabet padlocks with 5 gears
- 4x Padlocks with keys
- A lanyard/string for holding a pendant around the neck
- 3x Numerical padlocks with 4 gears
- 1x Numerical padlock with 3 gears
- 1x Old diary or notebook with blank pages
- 1x Suitcase
- 1x Trunk or large box
- 1x Strong box
- 1x Working voice recorder
- 1x Nightstand
- Old clothes and toys
- 1x Padded plush/soft toy
- 1x Small cubic box
- 1x UV lantern
- 1x UV marker pen
- 1x Berlin Wall map
- 2x Metters of thin chain
- 2x Coffee tables
- 2x Old doilies
- Any antique ornaments
- 1x Old telephone
- 1x Cot or bed
- Blankets and pillows for the bed
- 1x Carpet at least as big as the trapdoor
- Various photographic materials (an old camera, some rolls of film, negatives of some photos...)
- 1x Sound box with the following music:
 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uwL6lj8v8ttjj2nYDxeytP-0njyAoBBr?ths=tru
 e
- 1x Construction helmet or workman's harness
- 1x Gas panel or dummy hatch opening
- 4x Geolocalisers
- 2x Metres of black and yellow tape





Preparation

Glue the pages of two of the old books together, so that they become unreadable, and cover their covers with a sheet of paper aged with yellow or grey paint.

Take two of the old books and cut out a cavity between their pages and glue them together so that they look like boxes, as in the picture:



Take the last old book and cover the cover with the STASI coat of arms on a neutral background. On the first page, the index page, glue a bookmark that is visible from the outside. On page 161 of the same book, add, glued in, the diary page on the STASI files and mark beside it the letters and numbers forming the words **P A G I N A C E N T O**. On page 100, add in pen the sketch of a van and the numbers 12 17.

Take the box and put the UV torch inside. Add the words 'Let's shed some light on the situation!' inside the box. Close the box.

Write the numbers **100** on the map along the route of the Berlin Wall with a UV marker.

Take an old telephone and create an empty space inside it, for example by unscrewing the handset or removing the battery: this will be one of the spaces for the bugs (small device for recording and broadcasting sound).

Print out the following photographs:



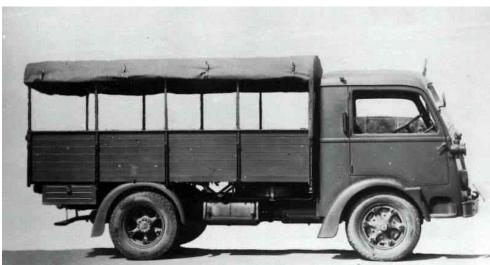












Write the respective descriptions on the back of the photographs, taking care to highlight some of the letters (written in red here):

- 1. Photo of the tunnel. Text: "In 1964, 57 people escaped to the west through an underground tunnel, since then remembered as "Tunnel 57"".
- 2. Picture of the Berlin Wall. Text: 'The Berlin Wall was more than 140 km long. In 1962 a second wall was built in parallel to double the 'security'".
- 3. Photo of the hot air balloon. Text: 'In 1979 the two families of Strelzyk and Wetzel crossed the wall in a hot air balloon, carried by the wind. The balloon was sewn





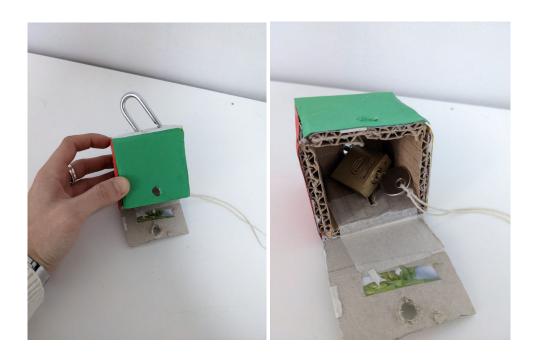
together in great secrecy with a gas cylinder and a stove pipe and rose 2000 metres above the ground".

- 4. Photo of the truck. Text: 'The goods crossed the Berlin Wall at the "Heinrich-Heine-Strasse" crossing point. In 1962 Klaus Brüske drove a lorry at top speed and broke through the barriers at the checkpoint. He was shot dead in the driver's seat but saved his two companions.
- 5. Photo of a photo booth. Text: 'Many photographers played an important role in documenting divided Berlin. Rudi Meisel was allowed to cross the wall and take pictures to dismantle prejudices about one side or the other. A book now collects his most famous shots. []".

Cut out part of the seams of the stuffed toy so that it is possible to insert a small object inside (this is where the bug will be placed).

Take the final bag and make three spaces for three padlocks, so that if you do not open all three you cannot find out what is inside. To each space respectively add the inscriptions: 'In memory of Hauswald Harald', 'In memory of Kurt Wordel and Harry Deterling' and 'For Conrad Shumann and all people who make a choice'.

Decorate the small cubic box with the colours red, yellow, green and blue. Along the opening, make a hole for a padlock to keep it closed. On the opposite side, on one of the surfaces, make a slot for a padlock hook to come out, as in the photos below:



Add colour stripes on the four-digit padlock, each next to one of the numbers. Use the colours red, yellow, green and blue.







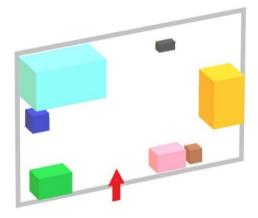
Add coloured letters on the geolocalisers that correspond, on the alphanumeric cipher, to the numbers that open the coloured banded padlock (pictured above). By finding the four geolocalisers and holding the cipher, it will be possible to link each letter to a number and each number to the colour to be "opened" in the padlock. Add a locking system to the cabinet that allows a padlock to be inserted. Add a locking system to the cabinet that allows the insertion of a padlock.

Add a locking system to the trapdoor that allows the insertion of a padlock.





Creating the Room



Insert the diary page of 27 February 1962, the one with the alphanumeric decoder and the one with the drawing of a bug, into the trapdoor. Also insert one of the bugs (it does not matter which one). Close the trapdoor with the alphabetical lock and the code **MUSE[]**, place it against a wall and cover it with the carpet.



Place the **bed** with the blankets and pillow on top of the carpet.









Insert a second bug into the sleeve of grandma's dressing gown (it doesn't matter which one), roll up the sleeve and place the jacket on top of the bed together with other clothes.



Next to the bed, place the **nightstand**. Put some old clothes in the drawers and, on top of them, the diary pages of 30 May 1961 and 16 June 1961, in two different drawers. Above the nightstand, put an old picture and any ornaments. Attach other old photos to the wall above the bed.

Against another wall, not far from the wardrobe, place a **small table** and on it, on top of a doily, place the open diary in plain view. In the diary, insert the pages 11 December 1960 and 20 December 1960, which will be easy to read. Next to the diary place the xylophone with the stick to play it.

On the wall behind the table, attach the calendar to which the Frank Sinatra concert ticket will be hung.

Place the third bug (it doesn't matter which one) inside the soft toy with the secret compartment and add the diary page 1 January 1963. Place the soft toy with the other toys in the **toy box** and place it under the table with the diary.







On the opposite side of the same wall, place the **second small table**, place a doily and the old telephone on it. Place the fourth and last bug in the unscrewed telephone handset and decorate the wall with a mirror and some photographs of Grandma.



Put the tape recorder in the tin box after checking that the batteries are charged along with the diary page 20 August 1961. Close the tin box and put it in the suitcase with some clothes and the diary page of 13 August 1961 in plain view. Close the **suitcase** with a number padlock and code 5322 and place it near the wardrobe.







Place the wardrobe against a wall, furthest from the entrance to the room.

Stick the map of Berlin on one of the inner doors. Attach the string to the two inner doors, so that the string stretches when you open the wardrobe. Attach the pictures to the string with the wooden pegs, taking care to put them in order so that the writing forms the code **MURO[**].

Add an old camera, film and negatives of old photos to one of the inner shelves on the left. Among these objects, place the box with the inscription 'Let's shed some light on the situation!' inside and put the UV torch and the diary sheet 'Since Berlin came together again' inside the box. Close the box.

Close the STASI book with the number padlock with the code 100 and place it on one of the inner shelves on the right.

Place the diary sheets beginning with 'Today' in the final box.



Put the printed diary sheets 'Only photography made me free' and the key to a padlock in the book with a camera on the cover.

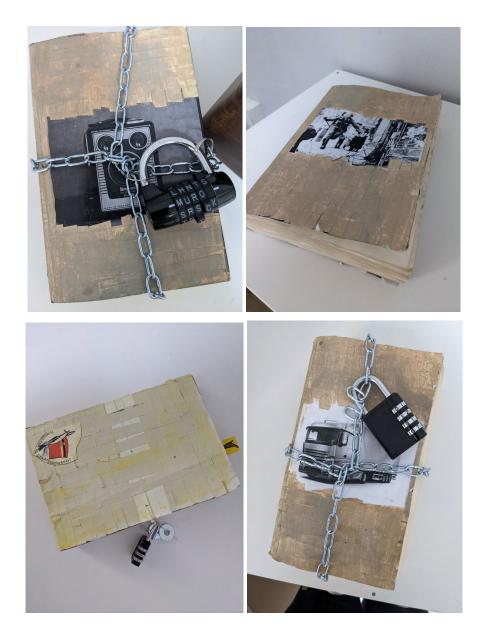




Close the ring of the final box bearing the name Hauswald Harald with that padlock. Close the book with an alphabetical padlock bearing the code **MURO[]** and place it on one of the right-hand shelves.

Put the diary sheets printed "On 15th August 1961" and the key to a second padlock into the book with a soldier on the cover. Use this padlock to close the ring of the final box with Conrad Shumann's name on it. Close the book and put it among the others.

Put the printed diary sheets "On 5 May 1963" and "On 23 October 2019" into the book with a van on the cover. Also insert the last remaining key and use the corresponding padlock to close the ring of the final box with the names Kurt Wordel and Harry Deterling. Close the book with a number padlock and the code **1217** and put it together with the others.



Add a few randomly chosen closed books between the others.

Place the final box, closed three times, as low as possible on the right-hand side of the cabinet.





Insert a key lock inside the little cubic security box and lock the cabinet with it. Hang the key on the lanyard so that it can be handed over after the test phase at the start of the game. Put the printed diary page 'I will be king' in the box. Close the safety box with the coloured band lock and code **3345**.



Hang the eviction notice near the entrance door and add some yellow-black safety strips near the entrance.

If necessary, place a chair for the facilitator inside the escape room and put the music box on top of the cabinet or in an easily accessible place.







Example set-up images

The following image shows an example of how to set up the escape room taken before the initial game.















How to play the game

Before entering:

Players are ushered into the escape room and placed in a place where they are comfortable, such as around a table. Here they are given the introduction:

"The last time you were in Berlin you were ten years old.

You have a happy but confused memory of it, like the one you have of a place where you spent your summer holidays during a mostly forgotten childhood. A place of carefree days, afternoons playing with cousins and grandmother's delicacies, before she moved to the warmth of the Mediterranean to rest her tired bones.

You certainly did not expect to have to go back to that house for a reason such as the one you have now. In fact, it was a phone call from your grandmother, who was very agitated, and then a phone call from your lawyer that made you pack your bags in a hurry and get on a train: for reasons of urban redevelopment, so says the municipality of Berlin, the house will be demolished to make room for a modern shopping centre. After all, it hasn't been inhabited for over ten years and hasn't been renovated in over twenty years.

And there's nothing you can do about it.

But while you're on the train, packing up the most precious and cherished furniture in your grandmother's memory, an e-mail from your lawyer gives you hope: apparently there is a clause in German law that says if a building is of historical or cultural importance it cannot be demolished. Your lawyer can only help you so much. Now it's up to you: you have to explore the house from top to bottom, dive back into the past and bring back the stories of Berlin, in the hope of saving a house that perhaps means a lot to you."

After a pause, the narrator adds: 'Before entering grandma's old house, however, it is good to remember that Berlin has its own history and that this history is important.

Not so many years ago, the modern, multicultural German capital was a divided city: you could not freely enter every building, walk freely in the streets, freely express your ideas. That is why you will be subjected to a short compliance test. People, you now know, are divided: into conformists and nonconformists'.

The players are tested. Whoever achieves the lowest score on the test is singled out and shown to everyone: he is given, as a sign of recognition and shame, a pendant (the key hanging from the lanyard).

Link to compliance test:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TRykjZy8a4w8HKi6HS-Qb0HJFA6h3of0qSbR9PA3nal/edit?usp=sharing

After registration, players are let into the escape room. Upon entry, they are handed the envelope from their lawyer, which contains the Lawyer's Letter and the Historical Evaluation Form.





Inside the room

1) A **diary** is found with some pages torn out. In the diary the love story between the grandmother and Heinz is told (see the padlet for the texts) and how it began at the Frank Sinatra concert. In the **calendar** hanging on a wall, one can find a ticket from the Frank Sinatra concert, on which there are directions to the venue (5 3 22, the code that opens the black suitcase). Under the calendar (inside a drawer of the bedside table), some detached pages of the diary. Following the chronological order of the pages is a way of putting the games in order.

The moment you start reading the diary, Elton John's 'Nikita' starts softly. At this stage the diary pages are read: 11 December 1960, 20 December 1960 (in the diary) 30 May 1961 and 16 June 1961 (in the bedside cabinet)

2) The **suitcase** is locked with a padlock which is opened with the combination from the previous game (5322). As well as various useless objects, it contains some pages from the torn diary which continue the narrative, talk about music and the hope of escape. It contains an audio file in a **recorder** that repeats the same four notes RE MI FA MI (from the song Another Brick in The Wall, but you don't have to understand it). When played correctly on the **xylophone**, they allow you to read, in sequence, the letters under each note on the instrument. The resulting code, MUSE opens the trapdoor (closed by a five-letter padlock, MUSE[]).

Here is the diary page 13 August 1961 and, inside the recorder box (so that it can be read later), the page 20 August 1961.

3) The **trapdoor** turns out to be bricked up. The diary pages found here talk about delusions, about STASI, about the fear of being discovered. Inside the trapdoor is a drawn image of what a bug looks like. The invitation is to try and find them, the grandmother has hidden them herself to see how easy it is not to see them. One of the bugs (it doesn't matter which one) is already inside the trapdoor along with the sheets. A small alphanumeric decryptor is proposed in the pages, like a draft of a bigger job. The grandmother is doing research.

Here are the diary pages: 27 February 1962, page with alphanumeric code + bug pattern. When the players open the trapdoor, Van Zandt's 'Checkpoint Charlie' starts.

- 4) Players search for **bugs**. Each one has a letter of a certain colour on it, which can be turned into a number using the code found in the trapdoor. They are hidden throughout the room. Once found, you have four letters and then four numbers. Those who make it easier can help the search by playing the bugs. The hardest bug to find is the diary page 1 January 1963.
- 5) The wardrobe is locked by a padlock inside a small box. The box is in turn locked by a number padlock. This lock has a coloured strip next to each number. The numbers





obtained from the bugs, correctly assigned to the colours, allow the code **3345** to be opened.

6) Inside the box, a **fingerprint reader** or, alternatively, a key lock. The player registered at the beginning puts in his or her fingerprint, or uses his or her key: the wardrobe can now be opened.

As the players cross the threshold of the wardrobe, David Bowie's "Heroes" starts up and lasts even as they are in room 2.

Inside the box, page from the diary "I will be king".

The wardrobe

The wardrobe in turn contains many toys, as if it were a miniature room. In semi-darkness, illuminated by small LEDs, inside is a kind of bookcase with doors.

- 1) One of the books, with a soldier climbing over the wall on the cover, can be opened: inside it is hollowed out and contains the first key and texts about illegally crossing a border and desertion. The key opens one of the three locks on the final box. As soon as they open this first book, the Scorpions' 'Wind of Change' starts to play softly.
- 2) Amidst the many books, in the bookcase, one easily finds a **UV lantern**, in the shape of a marker pen, accompanied by the inscription 'let's shed some light on the situation'. By pointing it at the **map**, which represents the situation of the wall in Berlin and which hangs on one of the inner doors, one can see numbers along the path of the Berlin Wall. The resulting code is **100**.
- 3) Code 100 opens the lock on the **STASI book**, which bears their emblem on the cover. The very obvious bookmark in the book leads to a page where the numbers 1 6 1 are circled. If you go, then to page 161, you will find a text which talks about the STASI files and which has the letters P A G I N A C E N T O underlined. If you go to page 100, you will find some markers which refer to motor vehicles (the drawing of a truck, underlined words such as "TRAZIONE", "MOTORE", etc.) and the code written 12 17, which opens the next book.
- 4) The **book with the truck on the cover** can be opened with the code 1217. Inside are the **second key** and some texts about the use of motorised vehicles by migrants. The key opens the second of the three locks on the final box.
- 5) In plain view at the opening of the cabinet are a number of **photographs** hung in a specific order. They represent some important concepts concerning the situation in the GDR. Behind each picture there is an inscription explaining the content. In the



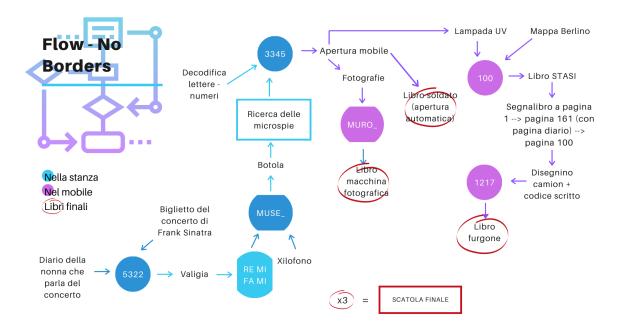


- order of the pictures there are some letters highlighted on the back of the various pictures, forming the word MURO[], the code of the last book.
- 6) The last book, with a **camera** on the cover, is locked with a five-letter padlock that opens with the code MURO[]. Inside, there are several sheets on the situation of photography in the GDR and the **last key**.
- 7) The final box is closed by three padlocks. On each of them is written the name of a character from one of the three books. By using the keys found in the books in the correct padlock, this box is opened. By inserting the dates found in the books into the respective locks, the last box is opened. Inside, the grandmother's latest writings on the importance of historical memory. Starts "Another Brick in the wall" from Pink Floyd.





Game Flow Diagram







How to Win

When players open the three locks of the final box they can access the last narrative. However, the game is not yet over. As the hands of the clock tick away, workers from the Berlin municipality approach to demolish the house. The only way to stop the machines is to hand over to the representative of the municipality (the character played by the facilitator) the document suggested by the lawyer, now filled in. Here the players can express on paper what they have discovered inside their grandmother's house, indicating the most important and the most evocative elements and suggesting an alternative solution to demolition. They should be free to write down what they want, there is no real correct answer: even deciding to let the house be demolished and maybe transfer some objects to a museum can make sense, although the trapdoor is of historical and structural importance in the building. When the players hand over the completed card to the facilitator, the game ends. After reading the document, the facilitator decrees the end of the story (e.g. with the sentence: "As a result of your handing in the document to the Berlin City Council, Grandma's house will not be demolished").





Facilitation

During the game, the facilitator will play the role of an employee of the Berlin municipality, present to allow the players to collect the last things before the demolition of the house. The facilitator can decide to hurry them up, indicating how much time is left until the arrival of the workers, possibly maintaining a gruff role and giving any advice about the game as random phrases ("Well, in my time they didn't play such strange instruments!"). However, it is advisable to modulate the tone of the facilitation on the proceed in a linear and smooth way, the facilitator may almost never intervene.

The municipal employee wears a distinguishing element (such as a helmet or bib) at all times: when this element is put down or removed, the facilitator steps out of his/her role.

Introducing the Game

The game focuses on the concept of historical memory and on the concept of barriers that prevent people from moving. At the time of the introduction, the facilitator should clarify the themes that are going to be addressed, even if only briefly, and state that the aim of the Escape Room is not to grade the best or rank the players, but to allow a narrative experience. Take the time to calmly go through each found text and each part in its entirety, trying to be a team player and to reflect on what you are going to face.

An integral part of the game is the final debriefing, which should be announced in the introduction: you will discuss what you have discovered during the game and collect the impressions of those who have played. The experience will last, in total, about 90 minutes.

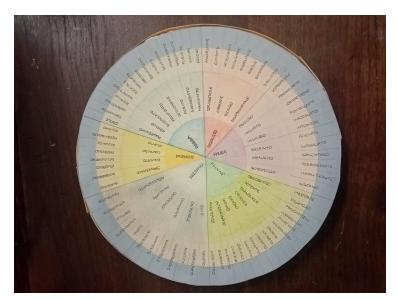




Debriefing the Players

When the game is over, we move on to the debriefing, which follows these steps:

- Exiting the activity: it is advisable to move to a different room from the one used for the escape room to conduct the debriefing. All game objects are left behind and a different setting is prepared in the new room: chairs are arranged in a circle, perhaps water is offered to the players. This helps deroling and allows a more relaxed atmosphere during the conversation.
- Emotional phase: the open question is asked: "How are you? / How do you feel?". Let the players answer as they feel, trying to allow everyone to have their say. You can proceed in a circle to allow everyone equal space. After the first impressions, try to get more specific about the feelings felt, e.g. by providing the speaker with an emotion wheel, so as to allow a wide use of vocabulary, or a thermometer of emotional intensity to help the speaker analyse himself.









- Descriptive phase: the focus then shifts to a brief overview of what you did. "What did you experience?", "What did you do?", "What was the escape room about?" can be questions to ask. Again, it is important to try to understand what message the players got from the game without suggesting one, instead trying to understand what they will take home in general. Give the opportunity to partly retrace the activity performed or to give space to what struck them most during the game, without forcing a precise analysis which will be done in the next phase. The descriptive phase can also be useful to retrace the memory of what was seen, as well as completing the deroling process of those who played, thus bringing everyone back to reality.
- Analogue phase: a reflection on the individual games. Here the facilitator can contribute with a small list, remembering to make use of the skills demonstrated by those who played ("I saw that you were very good at this specific part, would you like to tell how you solved the puzzle?"). The commentary of the players is free, even with criticism.
 - At this stage it is useful to take up the compliance test, which recalls several elements of the game, and ask for feedback on the issues raised.
- Call to action: "How does what happened resemble real behaviour?". In this phase you would like to invite the players to an active change in their lives: what they have learnt in the escape room should not stay in that room but be brought back into daily action. Again, you can start with the players: "How do you think you can act to make historical memory more central in your life? Do you think there are ways to counteract the barriers between people? How do you think you can act?
- Conclusion: In the final phase one can tell something about the project and how it works or was built. The questionnaire can then be presented to those who have played.

In order to answer the questions of the players and to get general hints on the content of the debriefing, here is some general information. If necessary, the players can be given a booklet (or a QR code referring to it) so that they can keep the information:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TlicWx16efPsTGOsL4rpEUI4FqxA2CHF/view?usp=sharing

The escape room is divided into two parts: the room and the wardrobe. In the room the plot leads us to investigate a love story from the grandmother's past of which we know nothing, but this soon becomes a secondary topic. Some reflections found in the diary, some objects in the room quickly make us understand that the grandmother was investigating the reality of East Berlin, what life was like under a regime. The story thus changes from the story of a division to a narrative about what it was like to live under oppression and what it meant, day after day, to want to escape. When the wardrobe opens, everything changes again: through the pages of a diary we understand how even today in the world the walls are numerous and divisive, how stories that seem to us to have passed are still current and present. The point is





no longer a person's story, but the concept of historical memory itself, which not only makes us remember, but can also help us interpret the present.

Every game and trial exhibited in the course is metaphorical in some way.

The initial test is inspired by the one in the escape room Wer ist wer by the We are Muesli collective (https://www.wearemuesli.it/wiw). Each question is designed to deal with part of the escape room: it is not certain that at the end of the game the answers given by the players in the test will have remained unchanged (perhaps a reflection could be made on this as well?). Psychologically, on the other hand, it may be interesting to understand a number of dynamics regarding the tests: did the players expect to have to take one? What kind of questions did they expect? Did they foresee that one of them would 'lose'? Could they guess who? Did they answer sincerely or to try to conform to an imaginary regime?

The podcast '1989' by Riccardo Gazzaniga (https://storielibere.fm/1989-wind-change/) has a strong focus on the role of music during the Soviet regime and in the DDR: the Moscow Music Peace Festival is an event of that year comparable to the western Woodstock, in which the Lenin stadium saw the presence of the biggest stars of world rock. Sound references during the escape room are easily found in the historian's narrative. In general, a reflection can be made on the role of music as a social and/or political instrument.

The World Press Photo (https://www.worldpressphoto.org/) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1955. It is also the world's most prestigious photography competition, awarding prizes once a year, continuously since its inception, to the most representative photos of that year. In addition to this, it organises meetings, workshops and seminars around the world.

There are also other agencies and associations that deal with photojournalism and handle some reportage, such as IOM (https://www.facebook.com/IOM/).

Some of our stories are inspired by the Italian play "Die Mauer" (https://marco-cortesi.com/il-muro-spettacolo/), from which the short film Vomag wins the short prize at the 70th Italian Film Festival. In it, historical accounts and interviews alternate with the emotional spectacle.

The Stasi, or Ministerium für Staatssicherheit, was founded in 1950 with the aim of monitoring the misbehaviour of all East German citizens. After the fall of the Wall, citizens stormed into their offices and despite the destruction of much of the secret material, many archives can still be consulted. Entry into the Stasi was not easy: often the children of the agents themselves were recruited, counting on their blind and unshakable faith. For two years, they were then secretly monitored and dossiers were written on their private lives, while teachers, neighbours and acquaintances were interrogated. If offered a job, acceptance meant a series of social and economic privileges, refusal often meant social stigma and the risk of losing other jobs.





German government website with archives on the Stasi:

(https://web.archive.org/web/20070703024302/http://www.bstu.bund.de/cln_042/nn_715 182/EN/Home/homepage node.html nnn=true nnn=true); story of a redeemed agent:

(https://web.archive.org/web/20090209041228/http://myspystory.com/intro.html).

Insight into the fall of the wall:

https://www.berlin.de/mauer/it/storia/apertura-del-muro/ (on the same site there is also a reconstruction of the historical route and some killings during the crossing attempts).

The phenomenon of Ostalgie (https://aspeniaonline.it/il-muro-invisibile-che-resiste/) is a kind of feeling of sadness for the fall of the GDR, an equivalent of the Italian 'si era meglio quando si era peggio', socially very present even today in the German capital.





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