



## STAGE 2: WORKING IN SMALL GROUPS

During this work phase, participants work in small groups with primary sources and background information on the voyage of the ship St. Louis. On the basis of different key questions, each group deals with one aspect of the story, and eventually presents and discusses it with the other participants. The participants can be divided into four or five groups. While group one to four deal with the story of the St. Louis the fifth group focuses on the topic of international responsibility for the situation of refugees.

### Instructions

Divide the participants into four groups. Each group receives historical sources and background information on the St. Louis, and is asked to present one aspect of the story of the St. Louis, by discussing a leading question. In the following step, each group will present these aspects and discuss their findings with the rest of the participants.

### Background Information



Group 1

Group 2

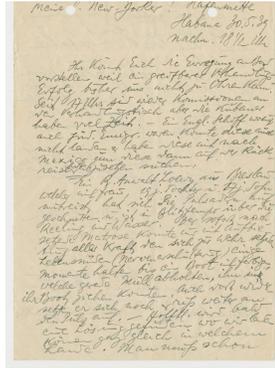
Group 3

Group 4





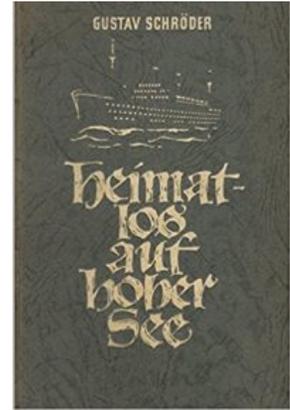
Presentation of the main actors in the St. Louis affair, as well as the course of events (based on a report from "The Springfield Union", published in Massachusetts, U.S.A, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939).



Presentation on the atmosphere on board of the St. Louis, as well as different ways in which the passengers deal with the situation (based on a letter by Julius Hermann to his family in New York from May 30<sup>th</sup> 1939).



Presentation of the arguments brought up by the Cuban government to justify its decision to refuse the refugees (based on a report by the American Consul in Havana on the European refugees in Cuba, from March 17<sup>th</sup> 1939).

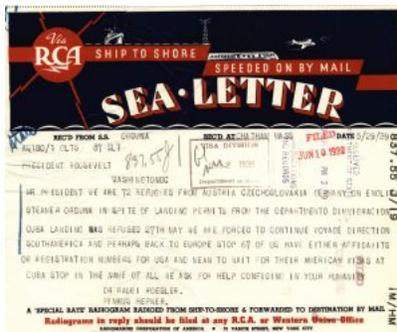


Presentation on Captain Schröder's description of events and his coping with the situation (based on excerpts from the memoirs of Captain Gustav Schröder).

Optional: Group 5



It is possible to divide the group into five small groups – the fifth group deals with the question of responsibility. This group receives a sea telegram sent by Jewish refugees to President Roosevelt, as well as excerpts from Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.





After working in small groups, the participants present their findings in the plenary, so that an overall picture of the St. Louis affair is created.

### Further questions for discussion

- After dealing with the case of the St. Louis from different perspectives and with different sources, who do you think should have been responsible for providing a solution to the problem?
- In more than one source a genuine concern was expressed that the passengers would rather commit suicide than be sent back. What is the meaning of this information?