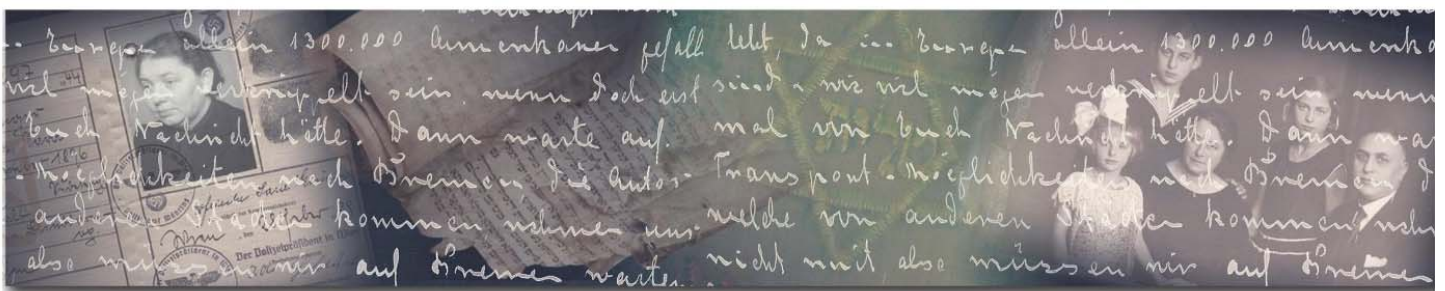




# Teaching the Holocaust

Grades 7-12



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## Why Teach about the Holocaust?

The objective of teaching any subject is to engage the intellectual curiosity of students in order to inspire critical thought and personal growth. Therefore, it is essential that educators consider questions of rationale whenever they approach any subject.

The Holocaust provides one of the most effective subjects for an examination of basic moral issues. A structured inquiry into this history yields critical lessons for an investigation of human behavior. Study of the event also addresses one of the central mandates of education in the United States, which is to examine what it means to be a responsible citizen. Through a study of these topics, students come to realize that:

- Democratic institutions and values are not automatically sustained, but need to be appreciated, nurtured, and protected;
- Silence and indifference to the suffering of others, or to the infringement of civil rights in any society can—however unintentionally—perpetuate the problems;
- The Holocaust was not an accident in history—it occurred because individuals, organizations, and governments made choices that not only legalized discrimination but also allowed prejudice, hatred, and ultimately, mass murder, to occur.

## Rationale

Because the objective of teaching any subject is to engage the intellectual curiosity of the student in order to inspire critical thought and personal growth, it is helpful to structure your lesson plan on the Holocaust with questions of rationale, or purpose, in mind. Teachers rarely have enough time to teach these complicated topics, though they may be required to do so by state standards.

Nonetheless, educators must develop lessons and make difficult content choices. A well-thought out rationale helps with these difficult curricular decisions. In addition, people within and outside of the school community may question the use of valuable classroom time to study the Holocaust. Again, a well-formed rationale will help address these questions and concerns.

## What Do I Teach?

**Before deciding what and how to teach, we recommend that you contemplate why you are teaching this history. Here are three key questions to consider:**

- Why should students learn this history?
- What are the most significant lessons students should learn from studying the Holocaust?
- Why is a particular reading, image, document, or film an appropriate medium for conveying the topics that you wish to teach?

**Among the various rationales offered by educators who have incorporated a study of the Holocaust into their various courses and disciplines are:**

- The Holocaust was a watershed event, not only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but also in the entire course of human history.
- Studying the Holocaust assists students in developing an understanding of the roots and ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping in any society.
- Thinking about these events can help students to develop an awareness of the value of pluralism and encourages acceptance of diversity in a pluralistic society.
- The Holocaust provides a context for exploring the dangers of remaining silent, apathetic, and indifferent in the face of the oppression of oneself or others.
- Holocaust history demonstrates how a modern nation can utilize its technological expertise and bureaucratic infrastructure to implement destructive policies ranging from social engineering to genocide.
- Studying these topics helps students to think about the use and abuse of power, and the roles and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and nations when confronted with civil rights violations and/or policies of genocide.
- As students gain insight into the many historical, social, religious, political, and economic factors that cumulatively resulted in the Holocaust, they gain awareness of the subject's complexity and a perspective on how a convergence of factors can contribute to the disintegration of democratic values. Students come to understand that it is the responsibility of citizens in any society to learn to identify danger signals, and to know when to react.

When you as an educator take the time to consider the rationale for your lesson(s) on the Holocaust, you will be more likely to select content that speaks to your students' interests and that provides them with a clearer understanding of a complex history. Most students demonstrate a high level of interest in studying this history precisely because the subject raises questions of fairness, justice, individual identity, peer pressure, conformity, indifference, and obedience – issues that adolescents confront in their daily lives. Students are also affected by and challenged to comprehend the magnitude of the Holocaust; they are particularly struck by the fact that so many people allowed this or any genocide to occur by failing either to resist or to protest.

You should avoid tailoring their Holocaust course or lesson in any degree to the particular makeup of their student population. By doing so, you may fail to contextualize the groups targeted by the Nazis as well as actions of those who resisted or rescued. This can result in misunderstanding or trivializing the history. Relevant connections for all learners often surface as the history is analyzed.

The study of the Holocaust must be examined within the context of European history as a whole. We encourage you to also examine the local context for this history. You should provide context for the events of the Holocaust by including information about:

- Antisemitism
- Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust
- The aftermath of World War I
- The Nazi rise to power

You might examine the following historical themes, among others, when constructing lessons on the Holocaust:

### **1933-1939**

- Dictatorship in National Socialist Germany
- Jewry in the Third Reich
- Early stages of persecution
- The first concentration camps
- World response

### **1939-1945**

- World War II in Europe
- Nazi racist ideologies and policies
- “Euthanasia” program
- Persecution and murder of Jews
- Persecution and murder of non-Jewish victims
- Jewish reactions to Nazi policies
- Ghettos
- Mobile killing squads
- Expansion of the camp system
- Killing centers
- Collaboration
- Resistance
- Rescue
- World Response
- Death Marches
- Liberation

### **Aftermath**

- Postwar trials
- Displaced persons camps and emigration

As you do so, you may consider this history from the perspectives of the:

- Victims
- Perpetrators
- Collaborators
- Bystanders
- Rescuers

## How to Teach About the Holocaust

There is no single “correct” way of teaching any subject, no ideal methodology that is appropriate for all teachers and students. The teaching of Holocaust history demands of educators a high level of sensitivity and a keen awareness of the complexity of the subject matter. What is offered here are guidelines and advice that might prove useful to school teachers in constructing their own framework, taking into account the learning needs of individual students. These guidelines draw on current best practice from a number of institutions with expertise in teaching the Holocaust to address some of the concerns teachers have about how to approach this very difficult subject and to present possible ways to go forward with curriculum design.

In addition, Holocaust education stands upon advances in research and has changed significantly over the last three decades; this document seeks to reflect a continuing process of pedagogical development and improvement and, as such, is not intended as the final word on this subject.

**The Holocaust can be successfully taught to students.  
Do not be afraid to approach this subject.**

Many teachers are reluctant to explore the history of the Holocaust with their students because of the perceived difficulties in teaching the subject. They are overwhelmed by how to convey the scale of the tragedy, the enormity of the numbers involved, and the depths to which humanity can sink.

They wonder how to move their students without traumatizing them; they worry about their students’ possible reactions to this subject and how to deal with “inappropriate” behavior in the classroom, such as giggling or expressing antisemitic and racist remarks.

Do not be afraid to approach this subject as, while it may appear daunting, experience has shown that the Holocaust can be successfully taught to students and may have very positive results.

### Define the term “Holocaust”

A clear definition of the Holocaust is essential. Many teachers apply this term in a very broad sense to encompass all victims of Nazi persecution. Yet most historians of the period use a more precise definition.

#### **Definition:**

Between 1933 and 1945, Germany’s government, led by Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist (Nazi) party, carried out a deliberate, calculated attack on European Jewry. Basing their actions on antisemitic ideology and using World War II as a cover, they targeted Jews as their main enemy, killing six million Jewish men, women, and children by the time the war ended in 1945. This act of genocide is known today as the Holocaust. As part of their wide-reaching efforts to remove from German territory all those whom they considered racially, biologically, or socially unfit, the Nazis terrorized many other groups as well, including Roma (also known as Gypsies), Germans with mental and physical disabilities, homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Poles, and Soviet prisoners of war. In the course of state-sponsored tyranny, the Nazis left countless lives shattered and millions dead.

## **Create a positive learning environment, with an active pedagogy and a student-centered approach**

The Holocaust challenges many assumptions that young people may have about the nature of society, progress, civilization, and human behavior. Students may have defensive reactions, negative feelings, or an unwillingness to go deeper into the history of the Nazi period or of the Holocaust. Trust between students and educators is important in order that such issues may be openly addressed and discussed. It is important to create an open learning environment where students are given space and time to reflect – where they are encouraged to ask questions, discuss their thoughts and fears, and share ideas, opinions, and concerns.

Learning should be student-centered. Your role is to facilitate rather than to lecture, and young people should be encouraged to play an active role in their own learning. History is not a body of knowledge to be transmitted from the mind of the teacher to the minds of the students, but should be a journey of discovery in which young people formulate their own lines of enquiry, analyze a variety of sources of information, question different interpretations and representations of events, and find their own answers to challenging historical and moral questions.

## **A cross-curricular approach will enrich your students' understanding of the Holocaust**

The events of the Holocaust touch upon so many aspects of human behavior that they are profoundly relevant to teachers across a range of subject disciplines. Although a sound understanding of the history must be the foundation for study of the Holocaust, historians do not have a monopoly on this subject. Imaginative links between departments can enhance a scheme of work by drawing on different areas of expertise, approaching the Holocaust from multiple perspectives, and building upon ideas and knowledge gained in other lessons.

The narratives of the Holocaust illustrate the extremes of human behavior, of hatred and cruelty but also of courage and humanity. Learning about the Holocaust through history evokes powerful emotions that poetry, art, and music can help students express creatively and imaginatively. The Holocaust raises important moral, theological, and ethical questions that your students could explore in their religious studies, citizenship classes, or civics lessons.

By co-coordinating an interdisciplinary approach and drawing upon the expertise of colleagues in other subject areas, you will share the teaching workload and enrich your students' understanding of the Holocaust.

## **Contextualize the history**

Events of the Holocaust and, in particular, how individuals and organizations behaved at that time, should be placed in historical context. The occurrence of the Holocaust must be studied in the context of European history as a whole to give students a perspective on the precedents and circumstances that may have contributed to it.

Similarly, study of the Holocaust should be viewed within a contemporaneous context, so students can begin to comprehend the circumstances that encouraged or discouraged particular actions or events. For example, when thinking about resistance, consider when and where an act took place; the

immediate consequences to one's actions to self and family; the degree of control the Nazis had on a country or local population; the cultural attitudes of particular native populations historically toward different victim groups; and the availability and risk of potential hiding places.

Encourage your students not to categorize groups of people only on the basis of their experiences during the Holocaust: contextualization is critical so that victims are not perceived only as victims. By exposing students to some of the cultural contributions and achievements of 2,000 years of European Jewish life, for example, you help them to balance their perception of Jews as victims and to better appreciate the traumatic disruption in Jewish history caused by the Holocaust.

### **Give broad and balanced coverage to this subject**

The Holocaust was not a uniform event but varied considerably from country to country and at different points in time.

### **Strive for precision of language and urge your students to do the same**

There are many myths about the Holocaust, and your students may come to this subject with many preconceived ideas. Ambiguities in your language use may help perpetuate misconceptions.

Avoid using the language of the perpetrators, which mirrors their views. Terms like “Final Solution” may be cited and critically analyzed but should not be used to describe the historical event.

Definitions are important because they demand accuracy and clear thinking. One example is the use of the term “camp.” Although people died at many camps created by the Nazis and their collaborators, not all camps were intentionally built as killing centers. There were concentration camps, slave labor camps, and transit camps, to name a few. Different camps functioned in different ways at different times. It is essential that you are very precise when describing the activities that occurred at the various camps associated with this history and avoid generalizations.

In addition, words that describe human behavior often have multiple meanings. Resistance, for example, usually refers to a physical act of armed revolt. During the Holocaust, it also encompassed partisan activity; the smuggling of messages, food, and weapons; sabotage; spiritual resistance; and actual military engagement. Resistance may also be thought of as willful disobedience such as continuing to practice religious and cultural traditions in defiance of the rules or creating fine art, music, and poetry inside ghettos and concentration camps. For many, simply maintaining the will to remain alive in the face of abject brutality was an act of spiritual resistance.

Try to avoid stereotypical descriptions. Though all Jews were targeted for destruction by the Nazis, the experiences of all Jews were not the same. Remind your students that, although members of a group may share common experiences and beliefs, generalizations about them, without benefit of modifying or qualifying terms (e.g., “sometimes,” “usually,” “in many cases but not all”) tend to stereotype group behavior and distort historical reality. Thus, all Germans cannot be characterized as Nazis nor should any nationality be reduced to a singular or one-dimensional description.

## **Distinguish between the history of the Holocaust and the lessons that might be learned from that history**

Be careful to distinguish between the history of the Holocaust and the moral lessons one can draw from a study of that history. There is a danger of distorting the historical narrative if it is oversimplified or shaped to better serve the particular moral lesson that teachers want their students to learn.

Learning about these events can sensitize young people to modern-day examples of prejudice and injustice; the Holocaust can confront students with stereotypes, myths, and misconceptions and enable them to test received prejudices against historical evidence. But moral lessons will not be well founded unless they are based upon an accurate and objective reading of the historical record.

Historical inquiry of the kind we should expect of our students will reveal to them the complexities of a world in which such choices were made and such decisions taken. Students should be confronted with real dilemmas faced by people in the past. Only then might people's action (and inaction) be seen within the context of their own time, and only then might we begin to draw meaningful lessons for today.

## **Avoid simple answers to complex questions**

A desire to “learn lessons” risks over-simplistic explanations of the Holocaust that neglect to take into account the historical context in which decisions were made. Such an approach can reduce students' understanding of complex events to straightforward lessons of right and wrong—“the Holocaust happened because people failed to make the correct moral choices”—and lead to a superficial reading of history.

Students should investigate historical questions. This activity might include asking why the fate of Jews in different countries varied so markedly and could explore the different types of German occupation regimes from country to country. Such inquiries will invariably raise moral issues, but students should be encouraged to view the past with humility. It is easy to condemn those who refused to hide or help their Jewish neighbors, but easy moral judgments of the bystanders will not create a deeper understanding of the history or make our students better citizens.

Given the complexity of this history, students should have opportunities to study and investigate the Holocaust in depth, including the dilemmas of the rescuers, who every day had to decide whether or not to continue risking their lives and those of their families to help those in hiding; why the Allies did not do more to save the Jews; why some of the Judenräte drew up lists of their fellow Jews for deportation to the death camps; why the majority of people in occupied lands did nothing to help their Jewish neighbors; and why ordinary men and women willingly participated in mass murder.

This complex subject matter does not always yield simple answers and many times more questions arise than actual answers. Indeed, it is important for young people to realize that some questions have no answers.

## **Provide your students with access to primary sources**

It is in the letters, diaries, newspapers, speeches, works of art, orders, and official documents of the time that the perpetrators, victims, rescuers, and bystanders reveal themselves. Primary source material is essential for a meaningful exploration of the motivation, thoughts, feelings, and actions of people in the past and for any serious attempt to understand the choices made and why events happened as they did.

Students should have opportunities to critically analyze original source material and to understand that analysis, interpretation, and judgment must be based on a sound reading of the historical evidence.

## **Students should be alerted to the fact that the perpetrators produced much of the evidence of the Holocaust**

Much of the evidence of the Holocaust—whether written documents, photographs, or film—was produced by the Nazis, so there is a danger of viewing the past only through the eyes of the perpetrators. If such material is not used carefully, we risk seeing the victims as the Nazis saw them—objectified, degraded, and dehumanized.

Such evidence needs to be contextualized, and you must take into account the cognitive and emotional age of their students, ensuring that use of these images is appropriate, that students are well prepared for the emotional effect they might have, and that you give young people space to reflect and to discuss their reactions afterward.

You should take care to balance those documents and photographs with the diaries, letters, photographs, and other evidence from the victims themselves, in order that their voices are heard.

## **Encourage your students to critically analyze different interpretations of the Holocaust**

Classroom learning is influenced by a broader cultural context and the Holocaust has entered the popular imagination through many and varied forms.

Academic and popular histories, feature films, the mass media, documentaries, art, theatre, novels, memorials, and museums all shape collective memory. Each interpretation is influenced by the circumstances in which it is produced and may reveal as much about the time and place in which it was made as it does about the events it is portraying.

It is important that students consider how and why such representations of the past are produced, the selection of the evidence upon which they are based, and the intentions of those who have made them. Students should understand that although there are legitimate areas of historical debate, it does not follow that all interpretations are equally valid (see section “Avoid legitimizing the denial of the past”).

## **Be responsive to the appropriateness of written and visual content and do not use horrific imagery to engage your students in a study of the Holocaust**

The explicit use of Holocaust images with the intent to shock and horrify is both degrading to the victims and insensitive to students. Respect for both the victims of the Holocaust and for your captive classroom audience demands a sensitive approach and careful thought to what constitutes appropriate material. Teachers who have spent time building relationships with their students risk a betrayal of trust by subjecting them to horrific and disturbing images. It is also this type of material that may cause stress and embarrassment, which can lead to nervous laughter and inappropriate remarks in the classroom.

You can teach the Holocaust effectively without using any photographs of piles of naked bodies, and the overuse of such imagery can be harmful. Engendering shock and revulsion is unlikely to constitute a worthwhile learning experience. It can, however, have a dehumanizing effect and reinforce a view of Jews as victims.

If you choose to use atrocity photographs, you should do so only where there is clear educational benefit to the students.

## **Allow your students to explore a variety of responses of the victims, including the many forms of resistance to the Nazis**

There were many forms of resistance to Nazi persecution, from armed struggle to finding ways of maintaining human dignity even in the most extreme circumstances of the ghettos and the camps. The victims of the Nazis did not always passively accept their persecution. It is important to study how the victims responded, the limits on their freedom of action, and the many different forms of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust.

## **Take care not to define the Jewish people solely in terms of the Holocaust**

You should place the events of the Holocaust in historical context. There is a need to show life before and after the Holocaust in order to clarify that the Jewish people have a long history and rich cultural heritage and to ensure that students do not think of Jews only as the dehumanized and degraded victims of Nazi persecution. Young people should be aware of the enormous loss to contemporary world culture that resulted from the destruction of rich and vibrant Jewish communities in Europe.

## **Do not teach or imply that the Holocaust was inevitable**

Just because a historical event took place and is documented in textbooks and on film does not mean that it was inevitable. Students and teachers alike often overlook this seemingly obvious concept. The Holocaust took place because individuals, groups, and nations made decisions to act or not to act. Focusing on those decisions yields insights into history and human nature and can better help your students become critical thinkers.

## **Do not attempt to explain away the perpetrators as “inhuman monsters”**

The Holocaust was a human event with human causes. It is necessary to “rehumanize” all the people in the Holocaust—to see victims, rescuers, collaborators, bystanders, and perpetrators as ordinary human beings in extraordinary circumstances. This is not to normalize the perpetrators, but rather to help students recognize that the majority were not sadistic psychopaths and that “evil” is not a sufficient explanation for the Holocaust.

The more difficult question is: how was it humanly possible that ordinary men and women, loving fathers and husbands, could participate willingly in the murder of innocent men, women, and children?

You must study the perpetrators’ motivations in depth, and students should use primary documents, case studies, and individual biographies to weigh the relative importance of ideology, antisemitism, ambition, peer pressure, economic opportunism, criminal psychopathology, and other factors in explaining why people acted as they did.

## **Be careful to distinguish between the perpetrators of the past and present-day societies in Europe and elsewhere**

Students should not form the opinion that all Germans were Nazis, nor that the German people were uniquely disposed to genocide. They should have opportunities to study the varied responses of the German people to Nazi policies, including enthusiastic support, cooperation, discontent, apathy, and active resistance.

Be careful to distinguish between the Germany of the past and Germany in the present. The events of the Holocaust need to be located in their historical context so that the people, politics, society, and culture of modern Germany are clearly distinguished from that of its Nazi past.

Students should also recognize that antisemitism is a worldwide and centuries-old phenomenon, and there were many non-German perpetrators and willing collaborators across Europe at the time. Other nationals served alongside SS units or as concentration camp guards, local police assisted in the round-ups and deportations of Jews to the death camps, and at times local people instigated pogroms against their Jewish neighbors or betrayed Jewish people in hiding. Governments allied to Nazi Germany assisted in the murders of their own accord.

## **Encourage your students to study local, regional, national, and global history and memory**

Since we live in a country that was one of the Allied powers during World War II, encourage your students to re-examine our national narrative of this period. Why did countries not take in more refugees during the 1930s and 1940s? Why did the Allies not make saving Jews one of their war aims? Could the Allies have done more to save the Jews of Europe?

## **Avoid comparisons of pain.**

If the universal lessons of studying this period are to be truly understood—if we argue that through a study of the Holocaust young people might be sensitized to persecution, discrimination, and hatred in

the world today—then you should include the experience of all victims of Nazi persecution, and the ideological background to that persecution, included in your scheme of work.

In the particularity of the Jewish experience we see the discrimination, economic exploitation, persecution, and murder that resulted from Nazi antisemitism, but for examples of other forms of hatred and intolerance—that are equally relevant to modern society—we need to look elsewhere: to the Nazi persecution and murder of Roma and Sinti, homosexuals, Communists, political dissenters, and social nonconformists.

You must address the suffering of all victims of Nazi persecution without relativizing the Jewish experience. There can be no hierarchy of suffering, either within the history of the Nazi period or between the Holocaust and other genocides.

The experience of the other victims of Nazi persecution should not be relegated to a single add-on lesson, with each of these distinct groups treated as if all were the same. Instead, you should integrate the stories of these groups within the narrative of the persecution of the Jewish people. For example, students could investigate the similarities and differences between the genocide of the Jews and that of the Roma and Sinti, or the link between the personnel and methods of the Nazi “euthanasia” program and the death camps of Eastern Europe.

A study of the Holocaust should always highlight the different policies carried out by the Nazi regime toward various groups of people. However, these distinctions should not be presented as a basis for comparison of the level of suffering between those groups during the Holocaust. One cannot presume that the horror of an individual, family, or community destroyed by the Nazis was any greater than that experienced by victims of other genocides. Avoid generalizations that suggest exclusivity such as “the victims of the Holocaust suffered the most cruelty ever faced by a people in the history of humanity.”

### **Do not romanticize history**

People who risked their lives to rescue victims of Nazi oppression provide useful, important, and compelling role models for students. Given that only a small fraction of non-Jews under Nazi occupation helped to rescue Jews, an overemphasis on heroic tales in a Holocaust unit can result in an inaccurate and unbalanced account of history. Similarly, exposing students only to the worst aspects of human nature as revealed in the history of the Holocaust runs the risk of fostering cynicism in your students. You should prioritize accuracy of fact along with a balanced perspective of Holocaust history.

## **Individualize the history by translating statistics into personal stories**

Statistical studies are important, and you should find methods to make the scale of the Holocaust and the numbers involved real to their students. However, many young people will find it difficult to relate to the tragedy of the Holocaust if it is presented only in statistical terms.

You should give students opportunities to see those persecuted by the Nazis not as a faceless mass of victims but as individuals. Use case studies, survivor testimony, and letters and diaries from the period to show the human experience and to ensure that students understand that each “statistic” was a real person, an individual with friends, family, and a life before the Holocaust. Emphasize the dignity of the victims at all times.

An exploration of the Holocaust that fails to challenge stereotypical views—that all perpetrators were mad or sadistic; that all rescuers were heroic, brave, good, and kind; that all bystanders were apathetic—risks dehumanizing people in the past and rendering them as caricatures rather than real human beings.

By focusing on the stories of individuals, of moral dilemmas faced and choices made, you can make the history of the Holocaust more relevant to young people and their lives today.

## **Select appropriate learning activities and avoid using simulations that encourage students to identify with perpetrators or victims**

Although empathetic activities can be very effective techniques for interesting young people in history by highlighting human experience and responses to events in the past, great care needs to be taken in selecting such activities when approaching such a sensitive subject as the Holocaust.

You need to be aware that, when using simulations, some young people might over-identify with the events of the Holocaust, be excited by the power and even the “glamour” of the Nazis, or demonstrate a morbid fascination for the suffering of the victims. Herein lies the danger of creative writing or role-play exercises that encourage students to imagine that they were directly involved in the Holocaust. When studying complex human behavior, many teachers rely upon simulation exercises meant to help students “experience” unfamiliar situations. Even when great care is taken to prepare a class for such an activity, simulating experiences from the Holocaust remains pedagogically unsound.

The activity may engage students, but they often forget the purpose of the lesson and, even worse, they are left with the impression that they now know what it was like to suffer or even to participate during the Holocaust. It is impossible for us really to be able to imagine—except in the most superficial sense—what it would feel like to be in circumstances so far removed from our own life experience.

Such techniques also pale alongside the genuine empathy many students are able to experience on encountering personal stories, case studies, and survivor testimony.

It may be useful, however, for students to take on the role of someone from a neutral country, responding to these events: a journalist writing an article for her newspaper about the persecution of the Jews; a concerned citizen writing to her political representative; or a campaigner trying to mobilize

public opinion. Such activities can be good motivators of learning and also highlight possible courses of action that students may take about events that concern them in the world today.

Furthermore, word scrambles, crossword puzzles, counting objects, model building and other gimmicky exercises tend not to encourage critical analysis but lead instead to low-level types of thinking and, in the case of Holocaust curricula, trivialization of the history. If the effects of a particular activity, even when popular with you and your students, run counter to the rationale for studying the history, then that activity should not be used.

### **Avoid legitimizing the denial of the past**

Holocaust denial is ideologically motivated. The deniers' strategy is to sow seeds of doubt through deliberate distortion and misrepresentation of the historical evidence. You should be careful not to unwittingly legitimize the deniers through engaging in a false debate.

Take care not to give a platform for deniers—do not treat the denial of the Holocaust as a legitimate historical argument or seek to disprove the deniers' position through normal historical debate and rational argument.

Many teachers believe, however, that the phenomenon of Holocaust denial must be explored with their students, either because their young people raise the question themselves or because teachers are concerned that their students might come across these views later in life and be unprepared for the deniers' rhetorical techniques and their ability to confuse or mislead. If this is the case, then Holocaust denial should be treated separately from the history of the Holocaust. It might be relevant to a separate units on how forms of antisemitism have evolved over time or as a media studies project exploring the manipulation, misrepresentation, and distortion employed by groups for political, social, or economic ends.

### **Be aware of the potential and also the limitations of all instructional materials, including the Internet**

Carefully evaluate the historical accuracy of all instructional materials. Antisemitism, homophobia, and anti-Gypsy feeling are widespread in many societies and may be present in your classroom. Be aware that such prejudices might exist among your students, and be careful when choosing instructional materials that, through the reproduction of Nazi propaganda and atrocity photographs, they do not unwittingly reinforce negative views of the victims. Ensure that your instructional materials include personal stories and case studies that challenge and subvert negative stereotypes of the victim groups.

In addition to printed materials, the Internet is a potentially valuable educational and research tool. However, you need to be careful in your use of the Internet because a very large number of seemingly plausible sites are written and maintained by Holocaust deniers and antisemites. You should warn young people about this phenomenon, making them aware that some search engines can produce unreliable results and help students identify legitimate and authoritative sites.

You should emphasize the need to critically evaluate all sources of information and to consider the context in which the information was produced. Encourage students to ask questions such as:

- Who wrote the information?
- What is the purpose of the Web site?
- Is there an agenda?
  - If so, how does this affect the selection and presentation of information?

Recommend authoritative sites that you have vetted. The websites listed in the back of this guide should serve as a good starting point, and each will have links to other reputable sites.

### **Distinguish between historical and contemporary events and avoid historical comparisons**

For many educators a key motivation for teaching about the Holocaust is that it can sensitize young people to examples of injustice, persecution, racism, antisemitism, and other forms of hatred in the world today. The Holocaust is often seen as a moral touchstone, a paradigm of evil. Although learning such universal lessons can be an important part of studying the Holocaust, students should also understand the differences between events, recognizing the particular as well as the universal.

Today there is a tendency to use the term “holocaust” as shorthand for all manner of terrible events, atrocities, and human tragedies. This trend is partly because of the limitations of language to adequately describe such events and partly because of a lack of information and understanding about the history of the Holocaust.

Unfortunately, the term “holocaust” has sometimes become trivialized or even corrupted through overuse, and the misappropriation of that term risks diminishing the crimes of the Nazis through false comparisons.

Learning about the Holocaust can lead young people to make useful comparisons with the modern world: human rights violations that happened under the Nazis (especially those that occurred during the pre-war period) may be comparable with modern examples of prejudice, discrimination, and persecution.

Genocide, however, is clearly and fundamentally different and distinct from the loss of civil rights. Of course, there have been other examples of genocide, and it is legitimate to ask, for example, about the similarities and differences between the Holocaust and the genocide in Rwanda. But students should be clear that not all tragic events constitute genocide and should beware of making false comparisons between genocides and crimes against humanity. Guard against superficial comparisons or the impression that we can decide upon our course of action today by simple reference to past events. We live in complex times and do our students a disservice if they believe that the lessons from history are so clear that they offer easy solutions in the present.

### **Be responsive to the concerns of your students**

Students who feel that the suffering of their own people or group has not been addressed may be resistant to learning about the persecution and murder of others.

It is important to study other histories of racism, enslavement, persecution, or colonialism that are particularly relevant to your student body.

Some teachers are concerned that teaching the Holocaust may enflame young people who falsely equate the suffering of Jewish people under Nazi persecution with Israeli policies in the Palestinian territories. But this is not a reason to avoid teaching about the Holocaust.

Although you may hope that learning about the Holocaust might sensitize students to examples of injustice, persecution, prejudice, and violations of human rights today, you should guard against a politicization of history and an appropriation of the Holocaust to further some campaigning agenda.

You must be sensitive to the feelings and opinions of students on issues of real concern to them. You should be prepared to examine the causes of conflict in the modern world, and young people should be given opportunities to discuss these issues openly. You must take care to clearly distinguish between different conflicts, and the causes and nature of each.

Although we want our young people to become active and engaged members of society, using the example of the Holocaust to encourage such positive attitudes may be counterproductive and lead to feelings of helplessness if students are not given opportunities to discuss how they may respond to issues of interest to them. Build time into your scheme of work to explore, together with your students, ways to take legitimate, peaceful, and plausible action on issues of interest to them.

*Guidelines For Teaching about the Holocaust*, Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research & *Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

### 1933

**Jan. 30** Hitler appointed Reich Chancellor of Germany (Prime Minister).

**Feb. 27** Reichstag fire.

**Feb. 28** Hitler given emergency powers by presidential decree.

**Mar. 5** Reichstag elections; Nazis win 44% of vote.

**May 20** Establishment of the first concentration camp in Nazi Germany at Dachau.

**Mar. 24** “Enabling Law” passed by Reichstag; used to establish dictatorship.

**Apr.** Jews excluded from government employment; includes teachers and university professors.

**Apr. 1** Nationwide boycott of Jewish owned businesses.

**Apr. 26** Formation of the Gestapo.

**May 10** Public burning of books by Jews and opponents of Nazis.

**Jul. 20** Concordat signed in Rome between Vatican and the Third Reich.

**Oct. 14** German withdrawal from the League of Nations.

**Nov. 12** Reichstag elections; Nazis “win” 93% of the vote.

**Dec. 1** Legal unity of German state and Nazi Party declared.

### 1934

**Jan. 26** Ten-year nonaggression pact signed with Poland.

**Mar. 9** Outbreak of rioting against German Jews by members of S.A. and Stahlhelm.

**May 10** Public burning of Jewish books and of books by opponents of Nazism.

**Jun. 30-July 2** “Night of the Long Knives”; Ernst Roehm, head of the SA, is murdered; SA purged.

**Aug. 2** Death of President von Hindenburg; Hitler declares himself Fuehrer of the German State; armed forces are required to take a personal oath of loyalty to Hitler.

**Aug. 20** Boycott of Nazi Germany declared by American Jewish Congress.

**Oct.-Nov.** First major arrests of homosexuals throughout Germany.

### 1935

**Jan. 7** Mussolini and Laval sign French-Italian Agreement in Rome.

**Jan. 13** Saar region annexed to Germany.

**Mar. 16** In violation of the Treaty of Versailles, military conscription introduced.

**Apr.** Jehovah Witnesses banned from civil service jobs; many arrested throughout Germany.

**Sep. 15** Nuremberg Laws announced; Jews deprived of citizenship.

## 1936

**Mar. 7** Germany army enters Rhineland in violation of Treaty of Versailles.

**Jul. 12** First arrest of German Gypsies; sent to Dachau.

**Aug. 1** In anticipation of 1936 Berlin Olympics, anti-Semitic signs removed from most public places.

**Oct. 25** Rome-Berlin Axis agreement signed.

## 1937

**Jul. 16** Establishment of Buchenwald concentration camp.

**Nov. 25** Political and military pact signed by Germany and Japan.

## 1938

**Mar. 13** Anschluss: Austria annexed by Germany.

**Jul. 6-15** Evian Conference: thirty-two countries discuss refugee policies; most countries refuse to let in more Jewish refugees.

**Aug. 17** All Jewish men in Germany will be required to add "Israel" to their names; all Jewish women will be required to add "Sarah."

**Sep. 29** Munich Agreement is signed by Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain; Czechoslovakia loses Sudetenland to Germany.

**Oct.** "Aryanization" of property of German Jews begins.

**Oct. 28** First deportation of Polish Jews from Germany.

**Nov. 9** Kristallnacht a nationwide pogrom in Germany and Austria; 30,000 Jews sent to concentration camps, 1400 synagogues

destroyed, 75,000 shops looted.

**Nov. 15** All Jewish children expelled from public schools.

**Dec. 2-3** Gypsies in Germany required to register with police.

## 1939

**Mar. 15** Nazis invade Czechoslovakia. Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia established.

**May 15** Ravensbruck concentration camp for women established.

**June** Jewish refugees aboard the SS St. Louis denied entry to the United States and Cuba; forced to return to Europe.

**Aug. 23** Hitler-Stalin Pact signed.

**Sep. 1** Germany invades Poland; World War II begins.

**Sep. 2** Stutthof concentration camp established in Poland.

**Sep. 3** Britain and France declare war on Germany.

**Sep. 21** Reinhard Heydrich (SS) order establishment of Judenrate and concentration of Polish Jews.

**Sep. 28** Partition of Poland between Germany and USSR.

**Oct.** Hitler authorized "euthanasia program" (T-4) in Germany; doctors to kill institutionalized mentally and physically disabled.

**Oct. 8** First Polish ghetto established in Piotrkow Trybunalski.

**Nov. 23** Distinctive identifying armband made obligatory for all Jews in Central Poland.

## 1940

**Feb. 8** Establishment of Lodz Ghetto.

**Apr. 27** Heinrich Himmler (SS) orders establishment of Auschwitz concentration camp; first prisoners, mostly Poles, arrive in early June.

**Apr. 30** Lodz Ghetto sealed.

**Spring** Nazis conquer Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, and France.

**Sep. 27** Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis established.

**Oct. 3** Anti-Jewish laws passed by Vichy government in France.

**Nov. 15** Warsaw Ghetto is sealed.

**Nov. 20** Hungary, Rumania, and Slovakia join the Nazis and Italians.

## 1941

**Mar. 1** Himmler orders construction of camp at Birkenau (Auschwitz II); construction begins in October 1941 and continues until March 1942.

**Mar. 3-20** Krakow Ghetto established and sealed.

**Mar. 24** Nazis invade North Africa.

**Apr. 6** Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.

**Apr. 24** Lublin Ghetto sealed.

**Jun. 22** Operation "Barbarossa": Nazi invasion of the USSR.

**Jun. 23** Einsatzgruppen begin their mass murder of Jews, Gypsies, and Communist

leaders in the USSR.

**Jul. 20** Minsk Ghetto established.

**Jul. 21** Hermann Goering gives Reinhard Heydrich the authority to prepare a "total solution" to the "Jewish Question" in Europe.

**Aug. 1** Bialystok Ghetto established.

**Sep. 1** "Euthanasia program" (T-4) in Germany ended; between 70,000 and 93,000 people had been murdered in Germany during the course of this program.

**Sep. 3** The first experimental gassing of Soviet prisoners of war at Auschwitz.

**Sep. 3- 6** Two ghettos established at Vilna (Lithuania).

**Sep. 19** German Jews required to wear yellow badge in public.

**Sep. 29-30** At Babi Yar, 33,771 Kiev Jews murdered.

**Oct.-Nov.** First deportation of German and Austrian Jews to ghettos in Eastern Europe.

**Oct.** Construction of Majdanek-Lublin extermination camp.

**Nov. 1** Construction of Belzec extermination camp begins.

**Nov. 24** Theresienstadt (Terezin) concentration camp established.

**Dec. 7** Japan attacks Pearl Harbor.

**Dec. 8** Gassing operations begin at Chelmno extermination camp.

**Dec. 11** Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.

## 1942

- Jan. 20** Wannsee Conference; plans for the “Final Solution” are drafted.
- Feb. 8** First Jews from Salonika, Greece sent to Auschwitz.
- Mar. 1** Construction of Sobibor extermination camps begins.
- Mar. 28** First Jews from France sent to Auschwitz.
- Jul. 22** Treblinka extermination camp completed.
- Jul. 22-Sept. 12** Mass deportations from Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka.
- Jul. 28** Jewish fighting organizations set up in Warsaw Ghetto.
- Nov. 24** Knowledge of extermination of the Jews of Europe publicly announced in U.S. by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.

## 1943

- Jan. 18-22** First Warsaw Ghetto Uprising breaks out.
- Feb. 2** Nazis defeated at Battle of Stalingrad.
- Feb. 26** First transport of Gypsies arrive at Auschwitz; Gypsy camp established.
- Apr. 19-May 16** Warsaw Ghetto uprising; Jews resist Nazis’ effort to deport them to death camps.
- Jul. 21** Himmler orders the liquidation of all ghettos in Poland and USSR.
- Oct. 2** Nazis attempt round-up of Danish Jews; Danish people use boats to smuggle most of Danish Jews (7,200) to neutral Sweden.

## 1944

- Mar. 19** Nazis occupy Hungary.
- May 2** First transport of Hungarian Jews reach Auschwitz; by July 9, over 437,000 Hungarian Jews are sent to Auschwitz; most of them are gassed.
- Jun. 6** Allied invasion of Normandy.
- Aug. 2** Gypsy camp at Auschwitz destroyed by Nazis; 3,000 gassed.
- Oct. 7** Prisoners blow up one of the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp.

## 1945

- Jan. 17** Nazis evacuate Auschwitz; “death marches” toward Germany.
- Jan. 27** Soviet army liberates Auschwitz.
- Feb. 4-11** Yalta Conference.
- Apr. 11** American army liberates Buchenwald concentration camp.
- Apr. 15** British army liberates Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.
- Apr. 29** American army liberates Dachau concentration camp.
- Apr. 30** Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.
- May 2** Soviet troops capture Berlin.
- May 7** Nazi Germany surrenders; end of World War II in Europe.
- Aug. 14** Japan surrenders; end of World War II.
- Nov. 20** First major Nuremberg War Crimes Trials begin.

**1946**

**Oct. 1** Conclusion of first major Nuremberg Trials; twelve Nazis to be executed, three sentenced to life imprisonment, four receive various prison terms, and three are acquitted.

*Sources: Feinberg, Stephen. SE, Classroom Focus - "Holocaust Chronology:" October 1995. Holocaust Chronology, Yad Vashem, Israel*

**1948**

**May 14** State of Israel established.

**Oct. 16** Execution of Nazi war criminals.

## General

**Aktion:** Murderous campaigns against Jews for the purposes of deportation or execution; Most viciously employed in the Eastern Territories.

**Anschluss:** German for “linkage;” Term used by Germans for Nazi Germany’s annexation of Austria on March 13, 1938.

**Antisemitism:** hatred, prejudice, oppression, or discrimination against Jews or Judaism.

**“Arbeit macht frei”:** German for “work will set you free;” Cynical slogan above entrance gates of a number of concentration and death camps, including Auschwitz, Dachau, and Theresienstadt. It was intentionally deceptive, since all Jews had indefinite sentences.

**Aryan:** In Nazi racial theory, a person of pure German "blood." The term "non-Aryan" was used to designate Jews, part-Jews and others of supposedly inferior racial stock. For the Nazis, a typical Aryan was blond, blue-eyed and tall. This ideal was based on the mythical Nordic ancestors of the German people

**Axis:** The political, military, and ideological alliance of Nazi Germany with Italy, Japan, Finland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria during the Second World War.

**Chancellor:** Chief (prime) minister of Germany, head of the government during the Weimar Republic.

**Concentration Camp:** In German, Konzentrationslager. Prison camps, often with numerous sub-camps, constructed to hold Jews, Gypsies, political and religious opponents, resisters, homosexuals, and other Germans considered "enemies of the state." Before the end of World War II, more than 100 concentration camps had been created across German-occupied Europe.

**Displaced Persons (DPs):** Jews and others who did not wish, at war’s end, to be repatriated to their former communities/countries of origin, and who were placed in DP camps.

**Einsatzgruppen:** Mobile units of SS and SD (Security Service) which followed German armies into the Soviet Union in June 1941. They were ordered to murder by shooting all Jews, as well as Communist leaders and Gypsies. At least one million Jews were killed by Einsatzgruppen.

**Evian Conference:** Called by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in July 1938 to discuss the growing numbers of German Jews being expelled from Germany, and how the world should deal with these refugees. Twenty-nine states and twenty-four voluntary organizations participated in the conference, and all gave reasons why they could not accept more refugees into their countries.

**“Final Solution”:** The term “Final Solution” (*Endlösung*) refers to “the final solution to the Jewish question.” Nazi code for the physical destruction of all the Jews of Europe. The term was used at the Wannsee Conference, Berlin, January 20, 1942 when German officials convened to discuss its implementation.

**Führer:** German word for “leader.” Hitler was the Führer of Nazi Germany.

**Genocide:** The word genocide (genos – race, nation, tribe; cide – killing) was coined by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish/Jewish lawyer who was able to encourage the United Nations General Assembly to pass a resolution in December 1948, giving genocide a legal definition in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The official definition is the intentional destructions of a national, ethnic, religious, or racial group.

**Gestapo:** In German, Geheime Staatspolizei. Secret State Police. It had powers of incarceration without judicial review. It became the most feared entity in Nazi occupied areas.

**Ghetto:** The Nazis revived the medieval ghetto in creating their forced "Jewish Quarter" (Wohnbezirk). The ghetto was a section of a city where all Jews from that city were forced to reside. Surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were often sealed so that people were prevented from leaving or entering. Established mostly in Eastern Europe (e.g.; Lodz, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, Minsk), the ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, starvation and forced labor. All were eventually destroyed, as the Jews were deported to death camps.

**Gypsies:** Popular term for Roma and Sinti, nomadic people believed to have come originally from northwest India. Traveling mostly in small caravans, Gypsies first appeared in Western Europe in the 1400's and eventually spread to every country of Europe. Prejudices toward Gypsies were and are still widespread. Approximately 250,000 to 500,000 Gypsies are estimated to have perished in Nazi concentration camps, killing centers and in Einsatzgruppen and other shootings.

**Holocaust:** The word “Holocaust” is derived from the Greek word holokauston, a translation of the Hebrew word “Olah,” meaning burnt sacrifice offered whole unto the Lord. It was a name given to what Winston Churchill once called “a crime without a name,” because in the ultimate manifestation of the Nazi killing program – the death camps – Jews were murdered in gas chambers and their bodies were consumed whole in crematoria and open fires.

**Jehovah’s Witness:** Religious sect that originated in the United States and had about 20,000 members in Germany in 1933. Witnesses, whose religious belief did not allow them to swear allegiance to any worldly power, were persecuted as “enemies of the state.” About 100,000 Witnesses from Germany and other countries were imprisoned in concentration camps. Of these, about 2,500 died.

**Judenrate:** Council of Jewish leaders established on Nazi orders in German-occupied population centers where ghettos were established. Jewish leaders, called Elders, were forced to carry out Nazi plans for Jewish ghetto life.

**Kapo:** An inmate in a concentration camp who supervised other prisoners as barrack heads, foreman of work details, etc. in return for additional rations and better living conditions.

**Killing centers:** Camps equipped with facilities to kill with poisonous gas: Belzec, Chelmo, Sobibor, Treblinka, as well as killing sections of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek-Lublin concentration camps.

**Kristallnacht:** (German: Night of Broken Glass) a violent, orchestrated pogrom against Jewish stores and synagogues on November 9-10, 1938, in Germany, Austria, and Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia.

**Lebensraum:** (“Living Space”) The acquisition of Lebensraum was a guiding principle of German

foreign policy expressed in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The Nazis believed they were entitled to conquer huge portions of eastern territories that they deemed necessary for the continued existence or economic well-being of the "Aryan race."

**Mein Kampf:** (German: My Struggle) Adolf Hitler's autobiography and philosophical/political creed, written in 1924, with the aid of his secretary, Rudolf Hess, in Landsberg prison. It embodied the ideas of racism, anti-Semitism, social Darwinism and the "will to power."

**Mischlinge:** Those who were not classified as Jews but who had some Jewish blood were categorized as *mischlinge* (hybrid) and were divided into two groups:

- **Mischlinge First Degree:** those with two Jewish grandparents, and did not belong to the Jewish religion and were not married to a Jew.
- **Mischlinge Second Degree:** those with one Jewish grandparent

**Muselmann:** A physically and emotionally run-down concentration camp inmate who was so weak he could not walk, work, or stand erect.

**Nazi:** (N.S.D.A.P.) Short term for the National Socialist German Workers Party, a right-wing, nationalistic, anti-Semitic political party formed in 1919, and headed by Adolf Hitler from 1921 to 1945.

**Nuremberg Laws:** Nazi laws passed in September 1935, which took German citizenship from Jews, defined them "racially," and prohibited Jewish-Aryan intermarriage.

**Nuremberg War Crimes Trials:** One of the greatest trials in history during which 21 top Nazi war criminals stood accused by the world's first International Military Tribunal. Among the indictment were charges of conspiracy, crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. At the end of the one year trial, all but two of the Nazi defendants were found guilty. Twelve of those convicted were sentenced to death, three to life imprisonment, and four to prison terms ranging from 10 to 20 years. The trials were held in the German city of Nuremberg from November 20, 1945 to October 1, 1945, by an international military tribunal of U.S., British, French and Soviet judges.

**Partisan:** Member of a resistance group operating secretly within enemy lines, particularly in rural areas.

**Persecution:** Act of causing others to suffer, especially those who differ in background or lifestyle or hold different political or religious beliefs.

**Pogrom:** Russian word for "devastation." Organized violence against Jews, often with understood support of governmental authorities.

**Prejudice:** An adverse judgment about a person or group of people based on limited knowledge or stereotypes.

**Reich:** German word for "empire." Hitler termed his regime the Third Reich. The first Reich was the Holy Roman Empire; the second was the Kaiser Reich.

**Reichstag:** Germany's lawmaking body under the Weimar. Continued to function during the Third Reich controlled entirely by Nazis.

**“Righteous Among the Nations”:** Gentiles who risked their own lives to save Jews during the Holocaust with no exception of material reward, and who are honored at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem, Israel.

**SA:** In German, Sturmabteilung. Nazi Storm Troopers. Also called "Brownshirts." Members of a special armed and uniformed branch of the Nazi party led by Ernst Röhm from 1922 to 1934. The organization faded when its leaders were executed in the Night of the Long Knives.

**Scapegoat:** Person or group of persons unfairly blamed for wrongs done by others.

**SD:** (Sicherheitsdienst; Security Service) An intelligence service for the Nazi Party and SS. Headed by Reinhard Heydrich, it became a terror instrument against “enemies of the state.”

**Selektion:** (German: Selection) in ghettos, the SS selected which Jews would be deported. In camps, the SS selected the exhausted and sick inmates for extermination upon arrival or during roll-call.

**Shtetl:** Yiddish word for small Jewish township or village. Any remaining shtetls were destroyed in the Holocaust.

**Sho’ah:** (Hebrew: mass slaughter) This Hebrew word is preferred over “Holocaust” in Israel. It is found in Isaiah 10:3 and means destruction, complete ruination.

**Sonderkommando:** German word for “special squad.” In the context of extermination camps, it refers to a unit of Jewish prisoners forced to take away bodies of gassed inmates who were cremated and to remove gold fillings and hair.

**SS:** In German, Schutzstaffel, Protection Squad. Units formed in 1925, as Hitler’s personal bodyguard. The SS was later built into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. It provided staff for police, camp guards, and military units (Waffen-SS) serving with the German army. It became the primary instrument in the Final Solution.

**“Stab in the Back Legend”:** The idea that Germany lost World War I because of an internal enemy who had stabbed Germany in the back. Back stabbers were defined as those who in the last stages of the war expressed the German’s people yearning for peace – the Democrats, the Catholic Center party, the Socialists, Communists and, of course, the Jews. The legend of the stab in the back (Dolchstoßlegende) was to become a favorite theme of Nazi propaganda.

**Star of David:** Star with six points, symbol of the Jewish religion. Jews were forced to wear a yellow Star of David in Nazi-controlled Europe. The patch had to be sewn on all visible clothing or an armband.

**Underground:** Organized group acting in secrecy during the war to resist Nazi domination.

**Waffen-SS:** The Waffen SS, the largest branch of the SS (39 divisions), often fought at the front line as regular soldiers.

**Wannsee Conference:** An 87-minute meeting held on January 20, 1942, at a villa in a Berlin suburb, attended by 15 leading Nazi officials. Reinhard Heydrich, its chairman, discussed plans to coordinate the “Final Solution.”

**Wehrmacht:** The name of Nazi Germany's army after 1935. The Wehrmacht assisted the SS in the "Final Solution."

**Weimar Republic:** Democratic regime in Germany from 1918 to 1933. During this period the country suffered economically, both from forced reparations after World War I and also because of the Great Depression, and politically, because of the unstable government. Nazism gained popularity, especially during the Great Depression, by positioning itself as a solution to these problems.

**Yalta Conference:** Yalta, a city in the Russian Crimea, hosted a wartime conference in February 1945, where US President Franklin Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin met. The Allies agreed to final plans for the defeat of Germany and the terms of its occupation.

**Yiddish:** A language that combines elements of German and Hebrew, usually written in Hebrew characters and spoken by Jews chiefly in eastern Europe and areas to which eastern Europeans migrated.

**Zyklon:** (hydrogen cyanide) A poisonous gas used in the gas chambers of the Nazi extermination camps.

## Geographical

**Auschwitz I:** Original and main Auschwitz camp in southwest Poland. Served first as Polish military barrack, then as concentration camp largely for gentiles.

**Auschwitz II:** (Birkenau) Largest Nazi Camp, opened in October 1941. It was used particularly for the extermination of Jews and Roma (Gypsies). It was the site of four gas chambers.

**Auschwitz III:** (Buna-Monowitz) Set aside as a labor camp for chemical giant I.G. Farben. It refers also to 36 subcamps.

**Belzec:** Nazi extermination camp in eastern Poland where an estimated 250,000 Jews were killed between March 1942 and December 1942. Earlier, Belzec functioned as a forced labor camp.

**Bergen-Belsen:** Located in northern Germany, transformed from a prisoner-exchange camp into a concentration camp in March 1944. Poor sanitary conditions, epidemics, and starvation led to deaths of thousands, including Anne and Margot Frank in March 1945.

**Buchenwald:** Concentration camp in north-central Germany, established in July 1937. One of the largest concentration camps on German-soil, with more than 130 satellite labor camps. It held many political prisoners. More than 65,000 of approximately 250,000 prisoners perished at Buchenwald.

**Chelmno:** (Kulmhof) Nazi extermination camp in western Poland where at least 150,000 Jews, about 5,000 Gypsies, and several hundred Poles, as well as Soviet prisoners of war, were killed between December 1941 and March 1943.

**Dachau:** First concentration camp, established in March 1933 near Munich, Germany. At first Dachau held only political opponents, but over time, more and more groups were imprisoned there. Thousands died at Dachau from starvation, maltreatment, and disease.

**Drancy:** Located near Paris, Drancy became the largest transit camp for deportation of Jews from France. Between July 1942 and August 1944, about 61,000 Jews were transported from Drancy to Auschwitz, where most of them perished.

**Lodz:** Before World War II, a major industrial city in western Poland with a Jewish population second only to Warsaw's. In April 1940, the first major ghetto was created there. Some 43,500 persons died in the Lodz ghetto from starvation, disease and exposure to the cold. Thousands more taken from the ghetto were killed by gassing at Chelmno. In August – September 1944, the 60,000 remaining Jews were sent to Auschwitz; only a few survived.

**Majdanek-Lublin:** Located near Lublin in eastern Poland, at first a labor camp for Poles and prisoner-of-war camps for Soviets, it existed as a concentration camp from April 1943 to July 1944. Tens of thousands perished there from starvation, maltreatment, and shootings. Also a killing center, where at least 50,000 Jews were shot or gassed.

**Mauthausen:** Concentration camp for men near Linz in upper Austria opened in August 1938. Many political prisoners were held at Mauthausen and its numerous subcamps. Classified by the SS as one of the two harshest concentration camps; many prisoners were killed there by being pushed from 300-foot cliffs into stone quarries. Close to 40,000 Jews perished there.

**Ostland:** (Eastern Territories) These Nazi-occupied territories included Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and western Byelorussia.

**Ravensbrück:** Concentration camp for woman opened in May 1939, 56 miles north of Berlin. An estimated 120,000 prisoners were inmates there, including many political prisoners, Jews, Gypsies, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

**Rhineland:** Demilitarized zone that Allies established after the First World War as a buffer between Germany and Western Europe.

**Sobibor:** Nazi extermination camp in eastern Poland where up to 200,000 Jews were killed between May 1942 and November 1943.

**Sudetenland:** Mainly German-speaking region that was part of Czechoslovakia between the two world wars. Annexed by Germany in October 1938 as result of the Munich Pact.

**Theresienstadt:** German name for the Czech town of Terezin, located about 40 miles from Prague. Nazis used the Theresienstadt ghetto, established in November 1941, as a "model Jewish settlement" to show Red Cross investigators how well Jews were being treated. In reality, thousands died from starvation and disease, and thousands more were deported and killed in extermination camps.

**Treblinka:** Nazi extermination camp about 50 miles northeast of Warsaw. Up to 750,000 Jews and at least 2,000 Gypsies were killed at Treblinka between July 1942 and November 1943.

**Warsaw:** The capital of Poland, where about 375,000 Jews lived on the eve of World War II. In October-November 1940, Germans established the Warsaw Ghetto, into which some 500,000 Jews were crowded. Of these, an average of 5,000 to 6,000 died each month from starvation, diseases, exposure to the cold, and shootings. Tens of thousands were deported to Treblinka in the summer of 1942. After an uprising in April 1943, organized by resistance fighters ended on May 16, 1943, the surviving Jews were deported to Nazi camps.

**Westerbork:** Transit camp in northeastern Holland for almost 100,000 Jews who were deported between 1942 and 1944 to Auschwitz-Birkenau, Sobibor, Theresienstadt, and Bergen-Belsen. Anne Frank and her family were held at Westerbork between August 8, 1944 and September 3, 1944, when they were put on the last transport to Auschwitz.

**Vichy:** A spa town in central France and the site of the collaborationist French government after the defeat of Republican France in 1940.

## Biographical

### **Anielewicz, Mordechai**

Leader of the ha-Shomer ha-Tsa'ir underground. In 1940 Warsaw, Anielewicz set up cells and youth groups, and published an underground newspaper. After hearing of the mass murder of Jews in the east, he organized self defense forces in the ghetto and, in 1943, became commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. After four weeks of battle, he was killed in his bunker.

**Bonhoeffer, Dietrich**

A German Protestant theologian and outspoken opponent of Nazi racist ideology. Bonhoeffer's involvement in the smuggling of fifteen Jews to Switzerland led to his arrest and subsequent execution by the Nazis. His courageous opposition to the Nazis enhanced his post-war influence.

**Churchill, Winston**

Sir Winston Leonard Spencer (November 30, 1874 – January 24, 1965) was a British politician, best known as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II. Churchill is generally regarded as one of the most important leaders in British and world history.

**Eichmann, Adolf**

SS Lieutenant Colonel and head of the Gestapo department of Jewish Affairs. Organized transportation of Jews from all over Europe to Nazi extermination camps. After the war, he escaped to Latin America. Captured by Israeli Secret Service in Argentina, he was brought to Israel for trial. He was tried in Jerusalem in 1961, convicted, and executed—the first and last official execution in Israel, which does not have the death penalty.

**Frick, Wilhelm**

Reich Minister of the Interior, Wilhelm Frick was responsible for the enactment of most of the racial laws. He gradually lost control of the ministry's affairs and was replaced by Heinrich Himmler in 1943. Frick then became governor of Bohemia and Moravia. He was one of the major war criminals found guilty and hanged at Nuremberg.

**Goebbels, Paul Josef**

Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany, and one of Hitler's closest confidants, he was responsible for spreading Hitler's message in Germany and beyond. At the end of the war, in Hitler's Berlin bunker, Goebbels and his wife took their own lives and those of their six children.

**Goering, Hermann**

Commander of the SA, Reichstag speaker, and commander of the German air force. Hitler also placed him in charge of Germany's economy and the "Jewish Question," and appointed him his successor. He played an important part in the murder of the Jews. Although sentenced to death at Nuremberg in 1946, he committed suicide.

**Hess, Rudolf**

Rudolf Hess (1894-1987) was a prominent Nazi leader and a close aide to Adolf Hitler. From 1933, he signed all German law. Just before World War II, he apparently felt that he had been removed from the decision-making process of the Nazi party, and in 1941 he flew to Britain. At the end of the war, he was sentenced to life imprisonment and committed suicide in 1987.

**Heydrich, Reinhard**

SS Lieutenant General, head of Reich Security, which included the Gestapo. Organized the Einsatzgruppen and led the Wannsee Conference of January 1942, where the coordination of the "Final Solution" was discussed. He was shot by members of the Czech resistance on May 27, 1942, near Prague, and died several days later. In reprisal for shooting Heydrich the Czech village of Lidice was destroyed. In addition, in honor of Heydrich, Nazis gave the code name "Operation Reinhard" to destruction of the Jews in occupied Poland, at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka extermination camps.

**Himmler, Heinrich**

Reich leader of the SS from 1929 to 1945, during the Second World War, he was head of a vast

empire: all SS formations, police forces, and concentration and labor camps. The senior SS leader responsible for carrying out the “final solution,” Himmler committed suicide before he could be brought to trial.

### **Hitler, Adolf**

German dictator and Nazi party leader who ascended to power in January 1933 and led his country into the Second World War. His deeply ingrained antisemitism and belief in racial superiority laid the groundwork for the Holocaust.

### **Mengele, Josef**

Senior SS physician at Auschwitz-Birkenau from 1943 to 1944. One of the physicians who carried out “selections” of prisoners upon arrival at camp, separating those to be assigned to forced labor from those to be killed. Mengele also carried out cruel research on twins deported to the camp. He would become known as the “Angel of Death.” After the war, he disappeared. The remains of a Wolfgang Gerhard, who died in a swimming accident in 1979, were discovered in Brazil in 1985 and identified as Mengele.

### **Roosevelt, Franklin Delano**

Thirty-second President of the United States, serving from 1933 to 1945.

### **Ribbentrop, Joachim von**

Foreign Minister of Germany from 1939-1945. He reached the climax of his career with the signing of the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939. His influence rapidly diminished after that, as war replaced diplomacy. He saw no alternative to the “Final Solution.” For crimes against humanity, he was condemned to death.

### **Ringelblum, Emanuel**

One of the leaders of the Anti-Fascist Bloc in the Warsaw ghetto, who organized the underground ghetto archives. His Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto gave detailed accounts of daily events and conditions. He was murdered by the Gestapo in March 1944.

### **Robota, Rosa**

Born in Poland, Rosa Robota was a Jewish underground activist in Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland. She helped smuggle gun powder out of the camp factory, and was subsequently arrested. She was tortured and interrogated, but would not reveal the names of fellow activists. Robota was hanged in 1945.

### **Rohm, Ernst**

Chief of Staff of the SA, he wanted a “second revolution” which would displace the existing class structure, and turn the SA into a People’s Army. Friction between Rohm and Hitler led to the killing of Rohm and 70 other leading Stormtroopers during the “Night of the Long Knives,” on June 30, 1934.

### **Rosenberg, Alfred**

Chief Nazi ideologist and head of the foreign policy department. In his major work "The Myth of the Twentieth Century," he wrote that race was the main factor determining science, art and culture. The Jews, he asserted, had distorted the ideals of race with their religion of humanity. He was condemned to death at Nuremberg, in 1946.

### **Schindler, Oskar**

Protected hundreds of Jews during the Holocaust by employing them in his enamel factory, thereby

saving them from deportations. He saved nine hundred Jews from the infamous Plaszow labor camp, outside of Krakow, by setting up a branch of the camp in his factory. He also saved eleven hundred other Jews from camps, giving them medicine and food.

### **Sendler, Irena**

One of the most active members of the Polish underground organization, Zegota (Council of Aid to Jews), Sendler smuggled Jewish children out of the ghetto and found hiding places for them with non-Jews. Arrested in 1943, she withstood torture to protect the children. Yad Vashem has named her one of the "Righteous Among the Nations."

### **Speer, Albert**

Hitler's chief architect and minister of armaments from 1942 to 1945. His task was to draw up new plans for the city of Berlin and create a center for party conventions and pageantry in Nuremberg. In 1946 at Nuremberg, he was charged with employing forced laborers. He admitted responsibility for his actions and was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

### **Streicher, Julius**

A Nazi politician, Streicher was one of the most rabid anti-Semites in the Nazi Party. He founded and edited the anti-Semitic newspaper "Der Stürmer," (The Attacker), and helped write the Nuremberg Laws. He wrote articles accusing Jews of vile crimes and calling for the destruction of the Jewish people. He was sentenced to death at Nuremberg.

### **Sugihara, Sempo**

As Japanese consul general in Kovno, Lithuania in 1940, Sempo Sugihara acted against his government's policy and granted some 1600 transit visas to Polish Jewish refugees stranded in Kovno. Of those whom thus escaped death in Lithuania, many eventually reached the United States. Sugihara, who had been dismissed from the Japanese Consular Corps for disobedience, was named one of the "Righteous Among the Nations" in 1984.

### **Wallenberg, Raoul**

Wallenberg was a heroic Swedish diplomat who saved the lives of thousands of Jews in Budapest, Hungary in 1944. He issued protective passports which saved Jews from deportation, personally removed Jews already on the trains, set up special hostels to protect the Jews he rescued and helped foil a plan to blow up the Jewish ghettos. After being detained by the Soviets in 1945, all trace of him vanished.

### **Zuckerman, Yitzhak**

A leader of the underground in Warsaw, Zuckerman organized a secret press and prepared youth for future immigration to Palestine. Ordered to the Polish side of Warsaw during the ghetto uprising, he tried to supply arms to fighters and made his way back to the ghetto to rescue others. He survived the revolt and moved to Palestine in 1947.

### **Norwegian non-Jews wore paper clips to express solidarity with Norwegian Jewry.**

When the Germans occupied Norway in June 1940, between 1,700 and 1,800 Jews lived there – most of them in Oslo and all but 200 of them Norwegian citizens. Acceding to German demands, the collaborationist government immediately implemented anti-Jewish legislation. In November 1942, in response to further demands, the government rounded up more than 700 Jews, who were subsequently deported to Auschwitz where most were killed. Although the Norwegian resistance managed to smuggle the remaining Jews to neutral Sweden, the wearing of paper clips had nothing to do with demonstrating support for these efforts or solidarity with Norwegian Jewry.

Rather, it represented one of many non-violent expressions of Norwegian nationalism and loyalty to King Haakon VII. These included listening secretly to foreign news broadcasts, printing and distributing underground newspapers, wearing pins fashioned from coins with the king's head brightly polished, from various “flowers of loyalty,” from the symbol “H7” (for Haakon VII), and – for a time, after the latter were outlawed – from paper clips (also occasionally worn as bracelets). Why paper clips? Presumably – although some dispute this – because they were invented by a Norwegian named Johan Vaaler in 1899. Ironically, he had to patent the device in Germany because Norway had no patent law at the time.

Vaaler did nothing more with his invention and, in subsequent years, paper clips would be manufactured and mass-marketed by firms in the United States and Great Britain (most notably, the Gem Company of Great Britain – originators of the familiar “double-U” slide-on clips, which the Norwegians may very well have worn).

### **The Germans used crushed Jewish bones to pave the Autobahn.**

The Germans crushed Jewish bones in two specific contexts only. One was in the Operation Reinhard death camps (Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka) in Poland. The other was in the former Soviet territories (Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania), where SS and police detachments known as Einsatzgruppen conducted mobile killing operations, shooting thousands of Jews and burying them in mass graves.

Beginning in 1942, when the Germans were no longer sure they could win the war on the Eastern front, exhumation crews were sent into these territories to open the mass graves, burn the bodies, and crush the bones in order to destroy all physical evidence. A special machine ground the bones into a powder of dust and very fine pieces, which were then reburied along with the ashes from the burned bodies.

However, there is no evidence that ground bone was used in the construction of the Autobahn, the system of highways intended to span Germany. Although Hitler began building the Autobahn in the 1930s, no construction was undertaken during the war years, and it was not resumed in earnest until the 1950s.

## **The Germans manufactured soap from Jewish bodies.**

Leading Holocaust scholars disavow the Nazi manufacture of soap, pointing to the fact that allegations about the Germans making soap from human bodies date back to French propaganda early in World War I, and that specific claims regarding Jewish bodies began to surface as early as August 1942 in the concentration camps. They also point out that evidence that would prove it conclusively – such as shipping bills, physical evidence from a manufacturing plant, or receipts for economic transactions – has never been found, whereas such evidence abounds for shipments of hair and dental gold removed from human bodies.

Moreover, these rumors also disturbed Heinrich Himmler, since the Nazis' extermination plans demanded strict secrecy. On November 30, 1942, after hearing that Rabbi Stephen Wise of New York had mentioned the soap rumors to the American press (November 24), Himmler wrote the following to Heinrich Müller, head of the Gestapo:

*“In view of the large emigration movement of Jews, I do not wonder that such rumors come to circulate in the world. We both know that there is present an increased mortality among the Jews put to work. You have to guarantee to me that the corpses of these deceased Jews are either burned or buried at each location, and that absolutely nothing else can happen with the corpses at any location. Conduct an investigation immediately everywhere whether any kind of misuse [of corpses] has taken place of the sort as listed in point 1, probably strewn about in the world as a lie. Upon the SS-oath I am to be notified of each misuse of this kind.”*

Nevertheless, over the years, Holocaust survivors have presented small blue-green cakes of soap, claiming that they were made from human fat because they were stamped RIF. Aaron Breitbart, a senior researcher at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, explains that this stands for “Reich Industry Fat.” However, in the camps, some Jews believed that the I was a J and that the acronym stood for “Pure Jewish Fat.” When analyzed, however, the bars turned up no evidence of human DNA. Thus, the RIF soap allegations were a rumor, even though many people believed these rumors at the time.

## **German Jews were a large proportion of Germany’s population.**

European Jewry made up a very small proportion of Europe’s population. On the eve of the Holocaust, some 9 million Jews lived in continental Europe, or 0.02% of the total population. Of these, the largest Jewish community was in Poland – about 3,250,000 Jews or 9.8% of the Polish population. Germany’s approximately 565,000 Jews made up only 0.8% of its population.

## **Adolf Hitler was Jewish.**

One of the most frequently asked questions is whether Adolf Hitler was Jewish or had ancestors who were. The idea stems from the rumors that Hitler’s grandfather was Jewish. Few, if any, historians believe this to be true. Hitler’s father, Alois, was registered as an illegitimate child with no father.

Thus, Hitler was unable to produce the same certificate of origin that he required of every German citizen on hazard of death. Alois’s mother worked in the home of a wealthy Jew and there is some chance a son in the household impregnated a woman (i.e., Hitler’s grandmother). Most historians believe, however, that Hitler was more likely trying to keep his family’s hereditary disposition toward

mental illness and feeble-mindedness, which he carried, a secret.

### **A Jewish doctor killed Adolf Hitler's mother.**

Some, like psycho-historian Rudolf Binion (*Hitler Among the Germans*, 1976), claim that Hitler's genocidal hatred of the Jews stemmed from the fact that Dr. Eduard Bloch, his family's Jewish physician in Linz, Austria, bungled Klara Hitler's treatment, causing her to die a prolonged and painful death from breast cancer in December 1907.

However, according to Bloch's 1943 testimony to the Office of Strategic Services in the United States, Hitler considered Bloch to have treated her well and seemed to harbor no ill will towards him, despite the fact that he had been especially close to his mother. Indeed, Dr. Bloch recalled that, after her death, "He [Hitler] stepped forward and took my hand. Looking into my eyes, he said: 'I shall be grateful to you forever.' Then he bowed."

In later years, Hitler demonstrated his gratitude with postcards, warm holiday greetings, gifts of his artwork, and – after he became Führer – with expressions of concern for Bloch's welfare. In 1937, after asking a delegation of Linz Nazis for news of the town, Hitler also "asked for news of me. Was I still alive, still practicing?" adding "'Dr. Bloch...is an Edeljude – a noble Jew. If all Jews were like him, there would be no Jewish question.' "

### **King Christian X of Denmark wore a Jewish Star badge to protest German orders that Danish Jews wear such badges.**

This is one of the most enduring and popular Holocaust myths. Some also add that the king urged all Danish non-Jews to wear Jewish star badges, or that they donned them in admiration of the king's gesture. This never happened, despite stories about the king's open support of his Jewish subjects that circulated throughout Europe, one of which tells of him threatening to wear a badge if such an order were given.

However, the Germans never required Danish Jews to wear badges, possibly because they realized how much resistance this order would arouse, intensifying the Danes' solidarity and rejection of Nazi thinking. Thus, through most of the occupation, as a gesture of solidarity with all of his subjects, the king continued his daily horseback rides through Copenhagen, alone and unprotected, and these rides became a focus of popular protest as scores of Danes turned out to escort him.

On the night of October 1-2, 1943, when German police were to begin arresting Danish Jews, non-Jews reacted spontaneously to the threat by alerting the Jews, helping them reach the seashore and cross to Sweden. When the Swedish government announced that it would take in all refugees from Denmark, the Danish resistance joined in, organizing the massive flight that followed. Meanwhile, King Christian X and the heads of the Danish churches protested to the Germans against the deportation. In the course of three weeks, some 7,200 Jews and some 700 non-Jewish relatives were taken to Sweden. Of the almost 500 Jews deported to Terezín (Theresienstadt), all but 51 survived, due largely to the Danish government's intercession on their behalf.

## **Jews were foreigners and aliens who controlled the economy, politics and culture of Germany and other countries.**

This myth is part of a persistent negative stereotype that emerged in the late Roman Empire, persisting through the 19th and 20th centuries and into the present, even though by 1939 Jews had been an integral part of Western Civilization from its earliest beginnings and an integral part of Europe since Roman times (1,500 years of continuous settlement by 1939).

However, from the 4th century on, after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews were vilified as Christ-killers and infidels and regarded as an inassimilable and alien “Other.” During the Middle Ages and the early modern period, European Jews were subjected to increasingly punitive measures, physical violence, ghettoization, expulsion and relentless pressure to convert.

They were forbidden to own land and prohibited from pursuing most occupations except for certain types of trading (such as peddling second-hand goods), "middle-man" occupations (such as factoring and dealing in grain, wood, and cattle), and “money trades” (lending money for interest – which the Roman Catholic Church called “usury” and prohibited to Christians – and banking).

Thus, Jews became identified with money and with two especially unsavory and persistent stereotypes: the heartless, unethical and exploitative usurer, who lent money at ruinous interest rates; and the shifty, unscrupulous, swindling peddler, who sold shoddy goods at exorbitant prices. So ingrained was this identification that medieval as well as modern depictions of Jews often showed them grasping, sitting on, or chasing money.

Adolf Hitler and the Nazis augmented these stereotypes with a 19th century myth that emerged as a backlash to Jewish socioeconomic involvement in Europe. European Jewry’s emancipation and consequent involvement in and numerous contributions to European cultural, social, economic and political life occurred in numbers disproportionate to its numeric presence in the general population.

This myth stressed the existence of a “secret” Jewish plot to dominate the world through economic and political control. In the 1890s, this was furthered by the publication of the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion – a forgery that originated in France and was translated into numerous languages. In Russia, it was found among the papers of Tsar Nicholas II, and in the United States, it was heavily promoted by Henry Ford in his Dearborn Independent. It was alleged to be the minutes of a secret society of Jewish notables described as “learned men [who] decided by peaceful means to conquer the world for Zion with the slyness of the symbolic serpent” – that is, by secret conspiracy.

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (and into the present), this image of the Jews cut across ideological lines, finding adherents on the left (socialists, communists, and anarchists) as well as on the right (conservatives, fascists, monarchists, and chauvinists) and finding expression in the media through cartoons and posters depicting Jews as something slimy (snake, lizard, bug, octopus) and sinister with a stranglehold on the globe.

## **Jews are a race.**

Race is a limited biological classification referring to certain shared physical features – such as skin

color, hair color and texture, body shape and size, and eye color – that are inherent in the genes and cannot be changed. Jews are not a race. Technically, there is but one race of human: Homo Sapien.

First and foremost, Jews are adherents of a religion – Judaism – around which a culture has evolved based on laws and rituals regarding diet, the Sabbath, and customs that can vary from place to place, because Jews live in many parts of the world. Secondly, Jews are also a “people” with a national/ethnic identity based on a shared history and historical homeland – Israel – that extends from ancient times to the present.

However, 19th century antisemites (and it is worth noting that the term “anti-Semitism” was invented in the late 19th century to lend these prejudices an aura of “scientific objectivity”), tying their assertions to the new (and since discredited) “science” of race and eugenics, used writings such as Joseph Arthur de Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Race* (1853-1855) and Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1899), along with the conclusions of Social Darwinism, to define Jews as a race, and a “decadent ” and “destructive” one, at that.

### **The Jews went to their deaths like “sheep to the slaughter.”**

This distasteful simile distorts the realities of European Jewry's situation during the Holocaust and perpetuates a stereotype of “historic” Jewish “passivity” and “cowardice.”

On the one hand, history offers many examples of Jews resisting persecution. Sometimes this resistance was armed: the Maccabean uprisings against the Seleucid Greeks; the Judean revolts against the Roman Empire; resistance in medieval Spain, France, Germany and Poland; and the organized self-defense units during 19th century Russian pogroms.

More often – in view of the fact that Jews were a minority dispersed among hostile majorities and governing regimes – this resistance was unarmed and was designed to enable them to survive in persistently hostile environments (there was often no other kind): petitions, bribes and protection payments, ransom arrangements, evasion and concealment, even a certain compliance with anti-Jewish laws and orders.

On the other hand, the Holocaust presented European Jewry with an unprecedented situation for which no historical or contemporary experience could have prepared them. Previous regimes had either not targeted every Jew for death or had not had the resources to implement this goal as systematically as the Nazis. Moreover, as late as mid-1942, most Jews were unaware that the “Final Solution” was even being planned.

Jews either had no concrete knowledge of death camps and mass murder or – unable to believe that there could be such atrocities in the 20th century – they dismissed such information as rumor and propaganda. Without allies or support networks, facing starvation and disease, responsible for parents and siblings, wives and children, they believed what they were told: that they were going to be “resettled” to work. The reality did not sink in until it was too late. Still, many Jews did resist, and their resistance took many forms.

In the ghettos, despite Nazi prohibitions, they observed and transmitted the tenets of their religion, participated in political organizations, and maintained secret presses that served as the nuclei around which many armed resistance groups would form. They kept the fabric of the community intact by

running soup kitchens, maintaining clandestine schools, and sponsoring cultural events.

They kept diaries and journals, took photographs and drew pictures, and maintained secret archives to bear witness for the sake of the world and future generations. In the camps, they persistently “chose life,” struggling to stay alive and to keep their loved ones alive, never letting go of their faith, hope, values and ideals, remaining determined to bear witness for the sake of the world and future generations.

Some chose physical resistance. They jumped from the trains, sought refuge in the attics and cellars and closets of non-Jews, or attacked their captors. They organized revolts in ghettos, concentration camps, and even in the death camps, and formed Jewish partisan units in the forests. Although they were a small minority, the fact that they existed at all is remarkable. As historian Lucy Dawidowicz concluded, after considering the overwhelming difficulties and extreme dangers of taking up arms against the Nazis: “The wonder...is not that there was so little resistance, but that, in the end, there was so much.”

### **How did Adolf Hitler die, and is he still alive?**

Since his death on April 30, 1945, much speculation has surrounded how Hitler died and if he’s still alive. Some theories surrounding Hitler’s death include: He ate poison and shot himself; he ate poison but did not shoot himself; he shot himself but did not take poison; one of Hitler’s doubles was killed, creating the illusion Hitler was dead and allowing the “real” Hitler to escape; somebody else killed Hitler.

Historians are almost certain that Hitler died in his bunker, despite a lack of physical evidence proving this. Historians and Holocaust experts believe that on the morning of April 29, 1945, in a civil ceremony in his bunker, Hitler married his mistress of many years, Eva Braun. The next day, they both bit into thin glass vials of cyanide. As he did so, Hitler also shot himself in the head. The handful of remaining Nazi loyalists wrapped his body in a gray army blanket, carried him to the shell-blasted Chancellery garden, saluted in honor and ignited his body on fire.

### **Jews were the only group singled out for extermination.**

Like Jews, Gypsies were singled out for racial persecution and annihilation. There are numerous records of Nazi policy statements calling for the total extermination of the Roma population. In a 1939 document, Johannes Berhrendt of the Office of Racial Hygiene issued a brief stating that “all Gypsies should be treated as hereditarily sick; the only solution elimination...The aim should therefore be the elimination without hesitation of this defective element in the population.”

Heydrich also included the Gypsies in his Final Solution: Gypsies “should be given the same treatment as the Jews.”

Adolf Eichmann made the recommendation that the ‘Gypsy Question’ be solved simultaneously with the ‘Jewish Question,’ Himmler signed the order dispatching Germany’s Sinti and Roma to Auschwitz on December 16, 1942. The ‘Final Solution’ of the ‘Gypsy Question’ had begun.

## **Dr. Josef Mengele made all “selections” for death upon arrival at the camps.**

Dr. Josef Mengele was Senior SS physician at Auschwitz-Birkenau from 1943 to 1944. He was one of multiple physicians who carried out “selections” of prisoners upon arrival at the camp. Dr. Mengele did make many of the “selections,” but so did other doctors, especially when the prisoners were regularly forced to parade before the doctors at frequent selections inside the camps.

## **Every concentration camp had a gas chamber and crematoria.**

This was not true for the majority of the camps, which were for slave labor, transit, and political prisoners. By 1945, the Nazis had established 10,004 camps. However, only six of these camps were designated to kill the Jews completely. Nazi camps equipped with gassing facilities for mass murder of Jews included Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek-Lublin, Sobibor, and Treblinka.

Up to 2,700,000 Jews were murdered at these camps, as were tens of thousands of Gypsies, Soviet prisoners of war, Poles, and other targeted groups.

## **Auschwitz-Birkenau was the only camp that existed in Auschwitz.**

Auschwitz had many satellite camps that surrounded the main camp, accounting for an area of 20 square miles – the area of an average American city. In 1944, more tracks led to Auschwitz than to New York’s Penn Station, which at the time was the largest railroad station in the world.

- Auschwitz I – Original and main Auschwitz camp in southwest Poland. Served first as a Polish military barrack, then as a concentration camp largely for gentiles.
- Auschwitz II – (Birkenau) Largest Nazi Camp. Opened in October 1941. It was used mainly for the extermination of Jews and Roma (Gypsies). It was the site of four gas chambers.
- Auschwitz III – (Buna-Monowitz) Set aside as a labor camp for chemical giant I.G. Farben. Also refers to 36 subcamps in the surrounding area.

## **All Jews in camps received tattoo numbers on their arms.**

Not all Jews in the camps were given tattoos, especially those designated for extermination, and not all camps made use of tattoos for prisoner identification.

## **All Jews were forced to wear the yellow Star of David badge.**

Denmark was the only occupied country where Jews were not forced to wear the yellow star. In addition, Jews in Central Poland did not wear star badges, but instead wore white armbands with a blue Star of David.

## **What Pastor Niemoeller really said:**

One of the most misquoted citations of the Holocaust is the “confession of guilt” by German Pastor Martin Niemoeller. According to his widow, Sybil Niemoeller, these are his exact words:

First they came for the Communists  
and I did not speak out –  
because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the Socialists  
and I did not speak out –  
because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists  
and I did not speak out –  
because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews  
and I did not speak out –  
because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me –  
and there was no one left  
to speak out for me.

### **There were 11 million victims of the Holocaust.**

The number 11 million is a fictitious number on a number of levels. “11 million Jews” is the population census that is mentioned in the 16th copy of the Wannsee Protocol, notes taken by Eichmann (January 20, 1942), only about the Jews. The issue seems to be the differentiation between victims based on NSDAP race policy, versus civilian deaths during war (i.e., victims because of genocide or casualties of war). If it applies to wartime civilian deaths, the correct number is probably between 30-35 million deaths, maybe more.

If this number refers only to racial and biological related categories, it should encompass only Jews, Roma Sinti and victims of T-4. This is not to belittle other victims of war and political policies, but other groups had some choices regarding compliance with Nazi domination or resistance, and some, like Jehovah’s Witnesses, homosexuals, and Gypsies, have a history of persecution even in democratic countries.

In Elie Wiesel’s “And the Sea Is Never Full,” Wiesel brings attention to this issue in a meeting with Simon Wiesenthal:

“I answer him that I don’t know where he obtained the figure of eleven million. To my knowledge, no historian has ever cited such a figure. Indeed, the only place I can remember seeing that figure was in Eichmann’s report on the Wannsee Conference, where leaders of the Third Reich decided on the Final Solution. But even there, Eichmann referred to S, only JEWS—those of Europe and elsewhere—all of whom were targeted...I can explain my position to him, the very same I set forth before President Carter and Congress: Not all the victims of the Holocaust were Jews, but all Jews were victims.”

In conclusion, when referencing the total number of victims of the Holocaust, it is best to say six

million Jews and millions of others. Holocaust organizations are making a united move to adhere to this message, and, as a center of Holocaust studies, we must maintain a consistent record of this figure.

Sources: *The Midwest Center for Holocaust Education Overland Park, Kansas*

## Frequently Asked Questions about Today's Germany

### What role does the subject of the Holocaust play in German curriculum and how would you describe the differences to the U.S. curriculum?

The Holocaust is taught as a mandatory, binding part of the history and civics in Germany. It is dealt with as a major topic of German and European history in the twentieth century. This is done in a way which clarifies the historical context: rise of the National Socialist movement in a specific historic situation, establishment of a dictatorship in Germany and the abolition of the rule of law, Nazi ideology, antisemitism in Germany, Nazi crimes against other groups, and the Nazi criminal war of aggression.

In civics, students study the political, ideological, and psycho-social conditions which made the Holocaust possible and the planning and organization of the genocide. Another important topic is the way Germany dealt and deals with this part of its history.

The topic is frequently taught in classes on (German) literature and religion, or ethics. Aspects of Holocaust history might also occur in classes on biology (racism), art (pieces of art produced during the Holocaust period or by artists dealing with this topic afterwards), and music (e.g., music composed in Theresienstadt). Diverse approaches are integrated in long-term educational projects.

The idea of Education after Auschwitz, based on a 1966 essay by the Frankfurt philosopher and social scientist Theodor W. Adorno, is still the basis for education today, and involves more than learning facts about Auschwitz. It is about preparing for being an adult, and based on Adorno's ideas, developing the "power of thought, self-determination, and non-participation," to prevent Auschwitz from ever reoccurring.

Similar to the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany is a federal state. Article 70 of the Basic Law grants the sixteen states jurisdiction over education. Thus, there are sixteen different education laws and also sixteen different curricula for historical-political education (among others, in the subjects of history, social studies, civics, and political science).

Nevertheless, the federal states cooperate, for instance, to guarantee equivalent standards for graduation (e.g., junior high school certificates or high school diplomas). This is done by the "Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany".

Paragraph 1 of the Berlin school law, whose mandate dates back to the immediate postwar period and the goal of re-education, expresses the consensus of all the federal states then and now:

"The goal must be the education of individuals, capable of standing resolutely against Nazi ideology and all other violent political belief systems. They must also be able to build a state and society based on democracy, peace, freedom, and human dignity. Individuals must be aware of their responsibilities toward society, and their behavior must recognize the basic equality of rights for all human beings, respect every honest conviction, and understand the necessity for progressive social conditions as well as peaceful understanding among nations."

In the United States, the 50 states are individually responsible for education policy. Therefore, the United States government has not created any national curriculum or course of study on the Holocaust.

Five states have enacted “legislative mandates” requiring the teaching of the Holocaust. These states are: California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, and New York. Illinois was the first state to create a mandate to study the Holocaust in 1990 and emended the mandate in 2005 to include all genocides.

Ten other states have regulations encouraging or recommending the teaching of the Holocaust: Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Washington. These regulations are either enacted by state legislatures or by state governors.

Twelve states have also created Holocaust commissions or councils that support Holocaust education: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia have social-studies standards that are crafted by their respective departments of education. Teachers are required to address these standards—all of which include study of the Holocaust—in their classes.

Sources: [www.learning-from-history.de](http://www.learning-from-history.de) & [http://taskforce.ushmm.org/teachers/educational\\_reports/country/usa.php](http://taskforce.ushmm.org/teachers/educational_reports/country/usa.php)

## **Is the Holocaust still an issue in today’s Germany, and how is it presented in German media?**

The topic of the Holocaust and remembrance is a constant public discussion in today’s Germany. The following are the three most significant discussions: The “Historikerstreit,” in 1987, a “Goldhagen debate” in 1996, and the “Walser-Bubis-Debate” in 1998—the last one between the German author Martin Walser and the head of the German Jews who are unified in the “Zentralrat”, Ignatz Bubis (who died in autumn 1999). All the debates dealt with the need to remember and the question if the Shoah was really a unique genocide in the history of mankind. These major debates remain a part of the Holocaust-discussion and the past as a vital element in German society.

The dealing with past, remembrance and memorialization will be an important issue in future politics, science, art, and education due to the fact that each generation has to re-tell the history and their own past. This increasingly infiltrates the media, and millions are exposed to these sources of education.

Compared to most other countries, broadcasts on the Holocaust are definitely a significant part of the popular/media culture in Germany. There are history broadcasts on the Holocaust, shows, and so forth. Therefore, children in Germany very often get their knowledge through the media.

The 1979 broadcast mini-series “Holocaust” was significant for the entire discourse on memory, memorialization, and remembrance of the Holocaust in Germany. Before that, Nazism was—in spite of student protests against the “perpetrator generation” in the late '60s, and in spite of the Auschwitz trials in the early '60s—not a topic of social concern at all. It was more a taboo topic, in both the public and social spheres. And, most of all, no one talked about it in the private sphere. On the institutional level, Germany was in the process of democratization since 1949 in terms of other political, cultural and social issues. In fact, the public discussions of the Holocaust really only gained importance in the last 25 years. Still, though, it remains a “constant seesaw between learning and forgetting,” as Saul Friedlander once put it. However, the TV series “Holocaust” really triggered a movement toward public discourse about the Holocaust. This movement is also reflected in each succeeding generation.

Source: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/germans/germans/education.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/germans/germans/education.html)

## Which memorials, museums and strategies of remembrance exist?

There exist approximately 100 memorial museums for victims of the Nazi regime in Germany. They are connected to “authentic” sites and deal with the victims, the perpetrators, and the sites of the crimes. These memorial museums explain the history of concentration camps, gas chambers used for “Euthanasia”, prisoner-of-war camps, and Gestapo and other prisons. The memorial museums in Germany work very closely together and consider themselves a network. Whereas the individual memorial museum may address the history of only one Nazi crime complex—depending on the history of the site where it is located—the memorial museums together cover all parts of the crime complex committed by Nazi Germany.

The task of the memorial museums is to explain the history of Nazi persecution and to describe the treatment of the different groups of persecutees in a manner expressing sympathy for the victims. Memorial museums also engage in social programs toward the survivors, their relatives, and friends. Memorial museums in Germany serve as evidence of the crimes committed and work to provide information about who was responsible for these atrocities. Hence, memorial museums are also places of critical self-reflection in German society. The different approaches that memorial museums take to address the same subject, and the friendly competition over the best methods of addressing Nazi crimes, have led to a very thorough knowledge and wide range of experience in the development of memorial museums in Germany during the last two decades.

The Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe was inaugurated in May 2005. In addition to the huge monument in the center of Berlin, a “Site of Information” in the basement of the memorial provides information about the Holocaust by documentation and also provides information about the broad network of memorial museums.

The House of the Wannsee Conference shows a new permanent exhibition about the Holocaust, opened in January 2006, and provides seminars on diverse Holocaust-related topics for students and adults.

Museums of contemporary history also show temporary exhibits about the Holocaust and the Nazi period. The German Historical Museum in Berlin presented such an exhibition in 2002, which was the most successful of all its displays; the Holocaust is also part of its permanent exhibition, which has been open to the public since June 2006.

The national Memorial Day for the Victims of the Nazi Crimes is January 27. It is marked by special parliamentary sessions, also in the federal states. Some states prepare for this event with competitions for young people to develop commemorative projects.

There was no opposition to the introduction of the Memorial Day. However, not every citizen is aware of its existence. It is important to note that many groups, including school groups, commemorate the victims of the Holocaust by holding diverse ceremonies on November 9, the anniversary of the so-called Reichskristallnacht (November Pogrom) in 1938.

Source: [http://taskforce.ushmm.org/teachers/educational\\_reports/country/germany.pdf](http://taskforce.ushmm.org/teachers/educational_reports/country/germany.pdf)

## How does the 2nd and 3rd generation of perpetrators deal with their legacy?

There are people in Germany who are committed to learning about the Holocaust, the perpetrators' motives and the suffering of the victims. They tend to reject a post-conventional moral understanding of history, and they reflect on the Holocaust as part of German collective self-identity and self-image.

There are also people who are opposed to Holocaust remembrance and feel that recognizing the Holocaust is too much of a burden. They are looking for a conventional national German identity or "German pride" and tend to split off the Holocaust as a "general phenomenon" similar to all other nations' crimes. The result is a kind of cleave, an internal split within the German population.

### **Additional resource for different forms of remembrance of children of perpetrator (for an older audience)**

**Niklas Frank:** son of Hans Michael Frank, a German lawyer who worked for the Nazi party during the 1920s and 1930s and later became a high-ranking official in Nazi Germany. He was prosecuted during the Nuremberg trials for his role in perpetrating the Holocaust during his tenure as Governor-General of occupied Poland. He was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity and was executed on October 16, 1946.

"In The Shadow Of The Reich" by Niklas Frank

**Martin Bormann, Jr.:** son of Martin Ludwig Bormann, a prominent Nazi official. He became head of the Party Chancellery (Parteikanzlei) and private secretary to Adolf Hitler. He gained Hitler's trust and derived immense power within the Third Reich by controlling access to Hitler.

**Malte Ludin:** youngest son of Hanns Ludin, was a Nazi leader of the SA and a Third Reich officer in charge of Slovakia. He was executed for war crimes in 1947. Malte Ludin does an admirable, disturbing, and often bemusing job of reminding us how much can change in one generation, and how difficult it can be to know one's father.)

"Two or Three Things I Know about Him," a documentary by Malte Ludin

### **Other Resources:**

"The Healing Wound: Experiences and Reflections, Germany, 1938-2001" by Gitta Sereny  
"My Father's Keeper: Children of Nazi Leaders--an Intimate History of Damage and Denial"  
by Stephan & Norbert Lebert

## Do Jews live in Germany today and what does German-Jewish life look like?

In 1989-1990, Germany and Europe were transformed. These dates mark the growth of Jewish life in Germany. Infused with large numbers, primarily immigrants from the former Soviet Union, the Jewish population of Germany, which was approximately 25,000 as the Wall fell, is now estimated at around 100,000, and has over ninety Jewish congregations and many new synagogues. Faced with dwindling numbers and an aging population, the Jewish community in Germany is the fastest growing world-

wide and the third largest in Europe after England and France. Berlin has the largest population (12,000) with Frankfurt and Munich following. Of course, the history of Germany makes any discussion of a new Jewish life in Germany uniquely complex.

Any optimistic vision is also marred by internal struggles, even as the German Jewish community recognizes that this immigration has saved it from extinction. The challenge remains: how to integrate immigrants, in this case Russian Jews who often do not fulfill the traditional requirements for “being Jewish,” and more importantly, how to find a place for them in the official Jewish community.

Consequently, while the German government was understandably unwilling to decide who was a Jew, many immigrants after arrival were confronted with questionable criteria for admission to the Jewish community. In addition, immigration put a great burden on the community whose infrastructure was not prepared to manage such numbers. Immigrants needed language instruction, jobs, housing, and moral support. Social welfare services and finances were strained. To these problems came traditional “ethnic” tensions between indigenous German Jews and Eastern European Jews. Ironically, the former were the smallest part of the Jewish community, whose constituents were primarily Eastern European displaced persons (DPs) and found themselves in Germany at the end of the war.

What have been called “Jews in Germany” since the end of the war when only a rump community made up primarily of DPs may, in the future, be replaced by the terminology of new “German Jews.” This marks the redefinition of a once large and vibrant community before the war (500,000) that now defines a new Jewish identity. This one is more hybrid since it is created by the mixture of German, Russian, Israeli, American, Canadian and other Jewish identities.

However, Jewish life in Germany is not only about the number of Jews actually living in Germany and their religious affiliations and identities. Rather, it is also about the way that Jews and Jewish issues exist in the awareness and imagination of the population at large and in the public sphere. While some see the great (and some would say disproportionate) attention paid to Jewish life past and present as only a legacy of guilt, or just a fashionable trend celebrating those who are different, others welcome the wide-ranging and diverse offerings displaying and recounting Jewish achievements and contributions to German culture.

Seen as an integral part of German history, the Jews are not exotic others, but Germans as well as Jew. Jewish cinema and cultural festivals, exhibitions, television programs and films round out the picture of a rich Jewish life that is being established in Germany today.

Source: Goethe-Institut, Online-Redaktion

## **Are Nazis or Holocaust deniers still part of German society?**

Today, Germany is dominated and led by two political parties (The Christian Democratic Union and The Social Democratic Party of Germany) that are both roughly aligned with the Democratic Party in the U.S. The opposition parties include left parties (such as the Green Party and The Left) and one centrist party (The Free Democratic Party).

On the far right lies the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), which is considered the party of the political extremists and, although small (less than 7,000 members in a total population of approximately 82 million), is perceived as a growing threat. The NPD was founded in the 1960s in West Germany – it is a haven for the politically right in Germany today. Over the last two decades, the

NPD has been steadily building stable structures of support in suburban areas of high unemployment and poverty – the NPD currently holds seats in two East German state parliaments.

Some argue that the NPD has tried to fill the emotional gaps left behind by the former socialist-communist East Germany. The party has become the home for the unemployed, frustrated self-employed businesspeople, the so-called “Wendeopfer” (victims of the German reunion), and so on. With the goal of recruiting new members, the NPD visit job centers and befriend the young unemployed. They attempt to attract teenagers by going into schools and giving out free CDs of politically-charged music. They offer after-school activities, summer camps, German culture groups, walking tours, community volunteering, and committees and citizen initiatives, as a front to organizing NPD seminars and trainings.

In order to recruit a new generation, NPD members have changed their appearance. In the 1980s and 1990s, NPD members could be easily recognized with their shaved heads, bomber jackets and black boots. This image contributed to them being perceived as an extremist group. However, today, NPD members attempt to blend in – they now wear suits or sport clothes, so that they are less visible and so that belonging to the NPD appears to be more acceptable.

These strategies – closeness with people, blending in, and offering practical help to the unemployed, youth and the community – are the methods of these so-called “kind Nazis,” through which NPD members argue for a “foreigner free Germany” and for the survival of the “Aryan race.”

In the aftermath of September 11th, an underestimated threat has grown: Neo-Nazi violence. In 2008, this problem returned to public consciousness with the near-fatal stabbing of the Passau police chief (activist against the Neo-Nazi-scene) in West Germany by a suspected neo-Nazi. Many argue that this attempt shows that right wing extremism in Germany has reached, once again, a threatening dimension and is no longer a problem confined to East Germany. The attack on the Passau police chief indicates that Neo-Nazism is also well established in West Germany; in fact, the NPD has its biggest membership there. Germany is facing a very real threat from the far right and remains vigilant to it.

## Online Resources

### **A Teacher’s Guide to the Holocaust**

[fcit.coedu.usf.edu/Holocaust](http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/Holocaust)

Provides a broad spectrum of classroom resources using photographs, documents, art, music, movies and literature.

### **Anne Frank Museum**

[www.annefrank.com](http://www.annefrank.com)

Provides comprehensive online resources on Anne Frank, including a bibliography, curriculum, downloadable materials and an interactive illustrated scrapbook on the life of Anne Frank for younger students.

### **Anti-Defamation League**

[www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org)

Extensive resources and materials on issues of anti-Semitism, civil rights, hate crimes and the Holocaust.

### **Einsatzgruppen Electronic Repository**

[www.einsatzgruppenarchives.com](http://www.einsatzgruppenarchives.com)

Provides an extensive collection of documents, testimonies, trial transcripts and photographs documenting the brutal history of the Einsatzgruppen mobile killing units.

### **Holocaust Teacher Resource Center**

[www.holocaust-trc.org](http://www.holocaust-trc.org)

Sponsored by the Holocaust Education Foundation, Inc. Educators (K-12) will find material; including entire documents that may be downloaded for direct use in the classroom.

### **Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR)**

[www.jfr.org](http://www.jfr.org)

Jewish Foundation for the Righteous was established to fulfill the traditional Jewish commitment to hakarat hatov, the searching out and recognition of goodness. They provide financial assistance to aged and needy non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. They also educate teachers and students about the history of the Holocaust and rescue. Educators will find valuable resources available for purchase, as well as information on seminar programs.

### **Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation**

[www.jewishpartisans.org](http://www.jewishpartisans.org)

Considered to be the largest on-line resource for information on the Jewish partisans. The site's materials are available free of charge, geared toward grades 7-12, and may be accessed directly from the classroom. Teachers and students can download study guides, watch personal testimonies, and explore a 3-D version of a partisan bunker and more.

### **Remember – Zachor**

<http://remember.org>

A growing database of background information including witness accounts, bibliographies; stories by children of survivors; and a growing section called “Legacy...An Education for Teachers” where teachers can come to learn from each other and share lessons.

### **Survivor of the Shoah Visual History Foundation**

[www.vhf.org](http://www.vhf.org)

Containing testimonies from 56 countries and in 32 languages this site provides online lesson plans, downloadable or stream video for use in the classroom, as well as online exhibitions and special segments using an extensive archive of testimony.

### **Simon Wiesenthal Center**

[www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com)

International Jewish human rights organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust by fostering tolerance and understanding through community involvement, educational outreach, and social action. Large site with teacher's resource materials.

### **Social Studies School Service (Resource Catalogue)**

[www.socialstudies.com](http://www.socialstudies.com)

A private developer and vendor of educational resources featuring prescreened and evaluated teacher's materials and lessons plans on teaching the Holocaust

### **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

Extensive resources with exceptional materials, narratives, images, virtual exhibitions, and lesson plans

### **Yad Vashem, Israel Holocaust Martyr's and Heroes' Remembrance Authority**

[www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)

Provides comprehensive online resources and a historical overview, virtual exhibitions, and lesson plans