

# Enhance Your Visit

## Suggested Pre-Visit Activities

The following activities have been developed for you to use before a trip to the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center. The more prepared students are for what they will see, read, and hear the more they may gain from their visit to the museum. These activities will draw out prior knowledge, provide avenues for a more in-depth study and review, and incorporate reading and writing strategies.

Facilitating pre-field trip activities sets the tone for your students and prepares them intellectually for their visit. It ensures that each student will come to the museum with similar and shared experiences with their peers, and will help contextualize the subject matter of the different exhibitions.

### K-W-L

(What I *Know*- What I *Want* to Learn- What I *Learned*)

#### Part One

1. Have students draw lines on a piece of paper to divide it into thirds (or fold a piece of paper into thirds so you have 3 long columns).
2. Students write *K, W, L* across the top, one letter per column.
3. On the chalkboard, whiteboard, overhead projector, or flip chart, do the same thing.
4. Keeping in mind the age of your students and the exhibit(s) they will visit, have students choose, or you assign, a topic from the list below, for students to write everything they **KNOW** under the *K* column.

Examples:

- The Holocaust
- Genocide
- Prejudice
- Nazis
- Ghetto
- Concentration Camp
- Behaviors: bystanders, perpetrators, victims, helpers, resisters

6. Ask students to pair up (their partner can have the same topic or not) and share with their partners what they have listed. Many students will include misconceptions about what they think they know that can be addressed later.
7. Come back together as a group. Go through each topic one by one and ask students who chose that topic to share what they **KNOW**. If you have big poster paper, each topic can be written as a heading on each paper ahead of time and then taped on the board and filled in as each topic is discussed.

## Part Two

1. For two minutes, have students write under the “W” what they *want* to know about the topics you/they chose in part one.
2. Suggest that as they tour the museum, they should be thinking about the questions they have written down. Part three (What I Learned) can be completed after your return.

# Engage with History

## During Your Field Trip: Field Trip Observation Guide

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 1

- I visited the \_\_\_\_\_ exhibition.
- I observed \_\_\_\_\_.
- Record your observations in the box below. Draw or write what you see.

### Part 2

I learned that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Part 3

I have questions. My questions are: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Explore Your Thoughts

## Suggested Post-Visit Activities

Throughout your tour of the Museum, docents will provide the opportunity for students to reflect and de-brief. However, students should have the chance to further consider and discuss what they saw and experienced on their visit back in the classroom. It is recommended to conduct a 30-40 minute discussion with students soon after their visit to help them recall what they have learned and to reflect upon the Holocaust and its implications. Use the following activities as the basis for the discussion.

### K-W-L

#### Part Three (To be completed after your visit to the museum)

1. Allow time for students to look over the already completed two parts of the K-W-L.
2. Have students take three minutes to write under the proper heading everything they learned about the questions they had listed under the *Want to Know* heading or to clear up any misconceptions
3. Ask students to compare what they had in the *Know* column.
4. Have students share what they learned and correct what they had in the *Know* column on their sheets.

### 3E Activities: Explore, Examine, Extend

**EXPLORE:** Brainstorm ahead of time a list of questions that are rolling in your head. Ask your students to do a similar “brain dump.” Have students identify what they found interesting or what they want to know more about.

**EXAMINE:** Investigate what was in the exhibit(s); probe the difficult questions and refer to the list you prepared ahead of time.

**EXTEND:** Begin independent research projects on a topic that interested them, less broad the better.

#### Start with Wonder

- Orient students to the physical space of the Museum and why museums are built. This can be a pre- or post-visit activity.

- Consider how museums and memorials help to remember the past but also build awareness and teach us about the present.
- Consider why it would be important to have a Holocaust museum.

### Focus on the Big Idea

Prepare a list of what you hope your students will be able to explain and/or define after having visited the museum. Create follow-up activities that help guide students to ponder questions surrounding this particular focus.

### EXAMPLE:

What combination of factors contributed to the Holocaust?

What did you learn about people's actions or reactions during the Holocaust?

Why is it important to learn about the Holocaust?

What significance does the Holocaust have to current world events?

## Chronology of Events

Ask students to list the documents, photographs, objects, and film footage that they recall most vividly from their visit. Then have them put those items in chronological order according to the historical events.

## Role-Playing as Reflection

1. Write a tour book entry as if you were a journalist who just visited the Museum. By evaluating information and evidence to support or reject your opinions, have students prepare an outline for the article with different points that you would want to discuss in your article to describe your visit to the museum.
2. Create a museum brochure or catalog. Highlight different areas of the Museum and exhibitions that you found interesting and intriguing. Identify and list discussion points you would address and ask if you were a docent.

## The "Big Question"

1. As you reflect on your field trip, identify what was the "Big Question" or focus for this trip for you as the educator. For some, it is how can students be more actively involved in standing up for themselves and others; for others, it's how human rights atrocities

continue to be perpetrated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some educators want to provide their students with different perspectives on history.

2. Next, ask your students to determine their own “Big Question.” Have each student answer the questions below in writing or picture notes within the grid.
  - What did you see that was interesting?
  - Why was it interesting?
  - What challenges were presented to you?
  - How did/can you handle the challenges?
4. Have students share their work with a partner and determine between themselves the “Big Question.”
5. Allow time for each pair to share their “Big Question” with the rest of the class. As they report their “Questions,” write each one on the front board for everyone to see.
6. Once each pair has shared, brainstorm possible solutions and answers to their “Questions.” Providing potential solutions is very important in order to conclude this activity.

## Expand and Assess Learning with Class Projects

The synthesis activities below incorporate language arts and content learning while reinforcing, expanding, and assessing learning progress. Student presentations are a great way to assess what students learned while on a field trip to the museum. This is also a way to assess what they have learned during your unit of study.

### Student Specialists

- Students choose a topic to focus on during your unit on the Holocaust. As you facilitate and guide their study on the unit, have each student focus on an independent research project. Students compile information from what they learned on the trip and that relates to their topic. Through a Pair-Share, Group-Share, a “brain dump,” or more formally as a PowerPoint, web page, etc., students share their new found knowledge with the class.

### Student-prepared Museum Guide

- After a student trip to the museum, have students prepare a guide for family and friends who they would like to bring on their second trip to the Museum. Include “must sees” within the museum; the most interesting, powerful, etc.

### Learning Journals

- These can be a collection of student-written and illustrated notes about their field trip experience.
- Have student keep a journal about their study of the Holocaust. Prepare questions for students to answer and topics to discuss that are important to them. Have students use illustrations, poems, and other modalities to help guide and assess their understanding of the topics presented in the exhibition(s) toured.
  - Many students have found that keeping journals when studying about the Holocaust or visiting Holocaust-related museums encourages their own self-understanding.

### Topic "Quilt"

- Create a class quilt that highlights some of the major themes of the Holocaust that were discussed during your field trip. It could be a "Culture Quilt:" a "map" of the world and each student is assigned a different country to collect information on to be inserted on the quilt.

# Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust

## 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 by keeping 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, lessons must be developed, and difficult content choices must be made. 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.

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 a study of 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 twentieth century but also in the entire course of human history.
- Study of 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 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.
- A study of 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 complexity of the subject 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.

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

### AGE APPROPRIATENESS

Students in grades 6 and above demonstrate the ability to empathize with individual eyewitness accounts and to attempt to understand the complexities of this history, including the scope and scale of the events. While elementary students are able to empathize with individual accounts, they often have difficulty placing them in a larger historical context. Such demonstrable developmental differences have traditionally shaped social studies curricula throughout the country; in most states, students are not introduced to European history and geography- the context of the Holocaust- before middle school. Elementary school can be an ideal location to begin discussion of the value of diversity and the danger of bias and prejudice. These critical themes can be addressed through local and national historical events; this will be reinforced during later study of the Holocaust.

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

Pre Nazi Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persecution and murder of Jews</li> <li>• Persecution and murder of non-Jewish victims</li> <li>• Jewish reactions to Nazi policies</li> <li>• Ghettos</li> <li>• Mobile killing squads</li> <li>• Expansion of the camp system</li> <li>• Killing centers</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Resistance</li> <li>• Rescue</li> <li>• World Response</li> <li>• Death Marches</li> <li>• Liberation</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antisemitism</li> <li>• Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust</li> <li>• The aftermath of World War I</li> <li>• The Nazi rise to power</li> </ul>			
1933-1939			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictatorship in National Socialist Germany</li> <li>• Jewry in the Third Reich</li> <li>• Early stages of persecution</li> <li>• The first concentration camps</li> <li>• World response</li> </ul>			
1939-1945			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World War II in Europe</li> <li>• Nazi racist ideologies and policies</li> <li>• "Euthanasia" program</li> </ul>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="881 695 1523 785">Aftermath</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="881 785 1523 919"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postwar trials</li> <li>• Displaced persons camps and emigration</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	Aftermath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postwar trials</li> <li>• Displaced persons camps and emigration</li> </ul>
Aftermath			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postwar trials</li> <li>• Displaced persons camps and emigration</li> </ul>			

As for historical themes or topics connected with teaching about the Holocaust, educators might examine the following, among others, when constructing lessons on the Holocaust. As they do so, they may consider this history from the perspectives of the:

- Victims
- Perpetrators
- Collaborators
- Bystanders
- Rescuers

(NEED TO CREDIT TASKFORCE AND USHMM GUIDELINES)

# How to Teach about the Holocaust

## METHADODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no single "correct" way of teaching any subject, no ideal methodology that is appropriate for all teachers and students. 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.

The teaching of Holocaust history demands of educators a high level of sensitivity and a keen awareness of the complexity of the subject matter. The following recommendations,

while reflecting approaches that would be appropriate for effective teaching in general, are particularly relevant to Holocaust education.

### *1. 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.

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

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

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

The history of the Holocaust raises difficult questions about human behavior and the context within which individual decisions are made. Be wary of oversimplification. Seek instead to nuance the story. Allow students to think about the many factors and events that contributed to the Holocaust and often made decision-making difficult and uncertain.

### *4. Strive for Precision of Language*

Any study of the Holocaust touches upon nuances of human behavior. Because of the complexity of the history, there is a temptation to generalize and, thus, to distort the facts (e.g., “all concentration camps were killing centers” or “all Germans were collaborators”). Rather, you must strive to help your students clarify the information presented and encourage them to distinguish, for example, the differences between prejudice and

discrimination, collaborators and bystanders, armed and spiritual resistance, direct orders and assumed orders, concentration camps and killing centers, and guilt and responsibility.

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; 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.

### *5. Strive for balance in establishing whose perspective informs your study of the Holocaust.*

Most students express empathy for victims of mass murder. However, it is not uncommon for students to assume that the victims may have done something to justify the actions against them and, thus, to place inappropriate blame on the victims themselves. One helpful technique for engaging students in a discussion of the Holocaust is to think of the participants involved as belonging to one of four categories: victims, perpetrators, rescuers, and bystanders. Examine the actions, motives, and decisions of each group. Portray all individuals, including victims and perpetrators, as human beings who are capable of moral judgment and independent decision making.

As with any topic, students should make careful distinctions about sources of information. Students should be encouraged to consider why a particular text was written, who wrote it, who the intended audience was, whether there were any biases inherent in the information, whether any gaps occurred in discussion, whether omissions in certain passages were inadvertent or not, and how the information has been used to interpret various events. Because scholars often base their research on different bodies of information, varying interpretations of history can emerge. Consequently, all interpretations are subject to analytical evaluation. Strongly encourage your students to investigate carefully the origin and authorship of all material, particularly anything found on the Internet.

### *6. Avoid comparisons of pain.*

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.”

### *7. 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 unit on the Holocaust can result in an inaccurate and unbalanced account of the history. Similarly, in exposing students to the worst aspects of human nature as revealed in the history of the Holocaust, you run the risk of fostering cynicism in your students. Accuracy of fact along with a balanced perspective on the history must be a priority.

### *8. Contextualize the history.*

Events of the Holocaust and, particularly, 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

### *9. Translate statistics into people.*

In any study of the Holocaust, the sheer number of victims challenges easy comprehension. Show that individual people—families of grandparents, parents, and children—are behind the statistics and emphasize that within the larger historical narrative is a diversity of

personal experience. Precisely because they portray people in the fullness of their lives and not just as victims, first-person accounts and memoir literature provide students with a way of making meaning out of collective numbers and add individual voices to a collective experience.

### *10. Make responsible methodological choices.*

One of the primary concerns of educators teaching the history of the Holocaust is how to present horrific, historical images in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Graphic material should be used judiciously and only to the extent necessary to achieve the objective of the lesson. Try to select images and texts that do not exploit the students' emotional vulnerability or that might be construed as disrespectful of the victims themselves. Do not skip any of the suggested topics for study of the Holocaust because the visual images are too graphic. Use other approaches to address the material.

In 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 best to draw upon numerous primary sources, provide survivor testimony, and refrain from simulation games that lead to a trivialization of the subject matter.

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.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust," accessed 17 June 2016, <https://www.ushmm.org/educators/teaching-about-the-holocaust/general-teaching-guidelines>

# Glossary

**Allies:** During World War II, the group of nations including the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, and the Free French, who joined in the war against Germany and other Axis countries.

**Anschluss:** The annexation of Austria by Germany on March 13, 1938.

**Antisemitism:** Opposition to and discrimination against Jews.

**Aryan:** A term for peoples speaking the language of Europe and India. 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.

**Assimilation:** The process of becoming incorporated into mainstream society. Strict observance of Jewish laws and customs pertaining to dress, food, and religious holidays tends to keep Jewish people separate and distinct from the culture of the country within which they are living. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-86), a German Jew, was one of the key people working for the assimilation of the Jews in the German cultural community.

**Auschwitz – Birkenau:** A complex consisting of concentration, extermination, and labor camps in Upper Silesia. It was established in 1940 as a concentration camp and included a killing center in 1942. Auschwitz I: The main camp. Auschwitz II (Also known as Birkenau): The extermination center. Auschwitz III (Monowitz): The I.G. Farben labor camp, also known as Buna. In addition, there were numerous subsidiary camps.

**Axis:** Germany, Italy, and Japan, signatories to a pact signed in Berlin on September 27, 1940, to divide the world into their spheres of respective political interest. They were later joined by Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.

**Babi Yar:** A ravine in Kiev, where tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews were systematically massacred.

**Bar-Mitzvah:** A term referring to a religious "coming of age" in Judaism, when a Jewish boy or girl turns thirteen. On this day, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah leads the

congregation in the service and rightfully enters the congregation as an "equal" member.

**Beer Hall Putsch:** On November 8, 1923, Hitler, with the help of SA troops and German World War I hero General Erich Ludendorff, launched a failed coup attempt in Bavaria at a meeting of Bavarian officials in a beer hall.

**Belzec:** Nazi extermination camp in eastern Poland. Erected in 1942. Approximately 550,000 Jews were murdered there in 1942 and 1943. The Nazis dismantled the camp in the fall of 1943.

**Bergen-Belsen:** Nazi concentration camp in northwestern Germany. Erected in 1943. Thousands of Jews, political prisoners, and POWs were killed there. Liberated by British troops in April 1945, although many of the remaining prisoners died of typhus after liberation.

**Blitzkrieg:** Meaning "lightning war," Hitler's offensive tactic using a combination of armored attack and air assault.

**Blood Libel:** An allegation, recurring during the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries, that Jews were killing Christian children to use their blood for the ritual of making unleavened bread (matzah). A red mold which occasionally appeared on the bread started this myth.

**B'richa:** The organized and illegal mass movement of Jews throughout Europe following World War II.

**British White Paper of 1939:** British policy of restricting immigration of Jews to Palestine.

**Brüning, Heinrich:** Appointed by President von Hindenburg in 1930, he was the first chancellor under the new presidential system which ruled by emergency decree rather than laws passed by the Reichstag.

**Buchenwald:** Concentration camp in North Central Germany.

**Bund:** The Jewish Socialist Party founded in 1897. It aspired to equal rights for the Jewish population. During World War II the Bund was active in the underground resistance and some Bund members were also part of some Judenrat councils. They took part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

**Bystander:** One who is present at some event without participating in it.

**Cabaret:** Large restaurant providing food, drink, music, a dance floor, and floor show.

**Cantor:** Leader of chanted prayers in a Jewish service; the congregational singer.

**Chancellor:** Chief (prime) minister of Germany.

**Chamberlain, Neville (1869-1940):** British Prime Minister, 1937-1940. He concluded the Munich Agreement in 1938 with Adolf Hitler, which he mistakenly believed would bring "peace in our time."

**Chelmno:** Nazi extermination camp in western Poland. Established in 1941. The first of the Nazi extermination camps. Approximately 150,000 Jews were murdered there between late 1941 and 1944, although not continuously. In comparison to the other extermination camps, Chelmno was technologically primitive, employing carbon monoxide gas vans as the main method of killing. The Nazis dismantled the camp in late 1944 and early 1945.

**Collaboration:** Cooperation between citizens of a country and its occupiers.

**Communism:** A concept or system of society in which the collective community shares ownership in resources and the means of production. In theory, such societies provide for equal sharing of all work, according to ability, and all benefits, according to need. In 1848, Karl Marx, in collaboration with Friedrich Engels, published the Communist Manifesto which provided the theoretical impetus for the Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

**Concentration camp:** Concentration camps were prisons used without regard to accepted norms of arrest and detention. They were an essential part of Nazi systematic oppression. Initially (1933-36), they were used primarily for political prisoners. Later (1936-42), concentration camps were expanded and non-political prisoners--Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, and Poles--were also incarcerated. In the last period of the Nazi regime (1942-45), prisoners of concentration camps were forced to work in the armament industry, as more and more Germans were

fighting in the war. Living conditions varied considerably from camp to camp and over time. The worst conditions took place from 1936-42, especially after the war broke out. Death, disease, starvation, crowded and unsanitary conditions, and torture were a daily part of concentration camps.

**Contra fact:** A musical technique that places new lyrics into melodies of old songs. This technique was used during the Holocaust, when lyrics were being written faster than composers could generate the music.

**Dachau:** Nazi concentration camp in southern Germany. Erected in 1933, this was the first Nazi concentration camp. Used mainly to incarcerate German political prisoners until late 1938, whereupon large numbers of Jews, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, and other supposed enemies of the state and anti-social elements were sent as well. Nazi doctors and scientists used many prisoners at Dachau as guinea pigs for experiments. Dachau was liberated by American troops in April 1945.

**Death camp:** Nazi extermination centers where Jews and other victims were brought to be killed as part of Hitler's Final Solution.

**Death marches:** Forced marches of prisoners over long distances and under intolerable conditions was another way victims of the Third Reich were killed. The prisoners, guarded heavily, were treated brutally and many died from mistreatment or were shot. Prisoners were transferred from one ghetto or concentration camp to another ghetto or concentration camp or to a death camp.

**Degenerate art:** Art which did not fit the Nazi ideal.

**Dehumanization:** The Nazi policy of denying Jews basic civil rights such as practicing religion education, and adequate housing.

**Desecrating the Host:** Jews were accused of defiling the Host, the sacred bread used in the Eucharist ritual, with blood. The red substance that can grow on bread which has a blood-like appearance is now known to be a mold. This allegation was used as the reason for a series of antisemitic attacks.

**Diaspora:** From the Greek word meaning dispersion, the term dates back to 556 B.C.E. when Nebuchadnezzar exiled the Judeans to Babylonia and refers to the Jewish communities outside Israel.

**Displacement:** The process, either official or unofficial, of people being involuntarily moved from their homes because of war, government policies, or other societal actions, requiring groups of people to find new places to live. Displacement is a recurring theme in the history of the Jewish people.

**DP:** Displaced Person. The upheavals of war left millions of soldiers and civilians far from home. Millions of DPs had been eastern European slave laborers for the Nazis. The tens of thousands of Jewish survivors of Nazi camps either could not or did not want to return to their former homes in Germany or eastern Europe, and many lived in special DP camps while awaiting migration to America or Palestine.

**Displaced Persons Act of 1948:** Law passed by U.S. Congress limiting the number of Jewish displaced persons who could emigrate to the United States. The law contained antisemitic elements, eventually eliminated in 1950.

**Drancy:** The camp at Drancy was a transit camp not far outside of Paris. In 1939 the camp was used to hold refugees from the fascist regime in Spain. In 1940 these refugees were given over to the Nazis. In 1941 the French police, under the authority of the Nazi regime, conducted raids throughout France that imprisoned French Jews. Many victims of these raids were taken to Drancy.

**Eichmann, Adolph:** SS Lieutenant Colonel and head of the Gestapo department dealing with Jewish affairs.

**Einsatzgruppen:** Mobile units of the Security Police and SS Security Service that followed the German armies to Poland in 1939 and to the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Their charge was to kill all Jews as well as communist functionaries, the handicapped, institutionalized psychiatric patients, Gypsies, and others considered undesirable by the Nazi state. They were supported by units of the uniformed German Order Police and often used auxiliaries (Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian volunteers). The victims were executed by mass shootings and buried in unmarked mass graves; later, the bodies were dug up and burned to cover evidence of what had occurred.

**Eisenhower, Dwight D.:** As Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, General Eisenhower commanded all Allied forces in Europe beginning in 1942.

**Euthanasia:** Nazi euphemism for the deliberate killings of institutionalized physically, mentally, and emotionally handicapped people. The euthanasia program began in 1939, with German non-Jews as the first victims. The program was later extended to Jews.

**Fascism:** A social and political ideology with the primary guiding principle that the state or nation is the highest priority, rather than personal or individual freedoms.

**Final Solution (The final solution to the Jewish question in Europe):** A Nazi euphemism for the plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe.

**Flossenburg:** Bavarian camp established in 1938/39 mainly for political, particularly foreign, prisoners.

**Frank, Hans:** Governor-General of occupied Poland from 1939 to 1945. A member of the Nazi Party from its earliest days and Hitler's personal lawyer, he announced, "Poland will be treated like a colony; the Poles will become slaves of the Greater German Reich." By 1942, more than 85% of the Jews in Poland had been transported to extermination camps. Frank was tried at Nuremberg, convicted, and executed in 1946.

**Führer:** Leader. Adolf Hitler's title in Nazi Germany.

**Gas chambers:** Large chambers in which people were executed by poison gas. These were built and used in Nazi death camps.

**Generalgouvernement (General Government):** An administrative unit established by the Germans on October 26, 1939, consisting of those parts of Poland that had not been incorporated into the Third Reich. It included the districts of Warsaw, Krakow, Radom, Lublin, and Lvov. Hans Frank was appointed Governor-General. The Germans destroyed the Polish cultural and scientific institutions and viewed the Polish population as a potential work force.

**Genocide:** The deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, cultural, or religious group.

**German Workers' Party:** As the precursor to the Nazi Party, Hitler joined the right-wing Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (DAP) in 1919. The party espoused national pride, militarism, a commitment to the Volk, and a racially "pure" Germany.

**Gestapo:** Secret State Police. Prior to the outbreak of war, the Gestapo used brutal methods to investigate and suppress resistance to Nazi rule within Germany. After 1939, the Gestapo expanded its operations into Nazi-occupied Europe.

**Ghettos:** The Nazis revived the medieval term ghetto to describe their device of concentration and control, the compulsory "Jewish Quarter." Ghettos were usually established in the poor sections of a city, where most of the Jews from the city and surrounding areas were subsequently forced to reside. Often surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were sealed. Established mostly in eastern Europe (e.g., Lodz, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, or Minsk), the ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, malnutrition, and heavy labor. All were eventually dissolved, and the Jews murdered.

**Goebbels, Paul Joseph (1897-1945):** Reich Propaganda Director of the NSDAP and Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda.

**Goering, Hermann (1893-1945):** Leading Nazi promoted to Reichsmarshal in 1940.

**Great Depression:** A deep, worldwide, economic contraction beginning in 1929 which caused particular hardship in Germany which was already reeling from huge reparation payments following World War I and hyperinflation.

**Guerrilla warfare:** Fighting in which small independent bands of soldiers harass an enemy through surprise raids, attacks on communications and the like.

**Gypsies:** A collective term for Romani and Sinti. A nomadic people believed to have come originally from northwest India. They became divided into five main groups still extant today. By the sixteenth century, they had spread to every country of Europe. Alternately welcomed and persecuted since the fifteenth century, they were considered enemies of the state by the Nazis and persecuted relentlessly. Approximately 500,000 Gypsies are believed to have perished in the gas chambers.

**Hess, Rudolf (1894-1987)** was the mentally unstable number three man in Hitler's Germany. He is best known for a surprise flight to Scotland in 1941. He was sentenced to life in prison at Nuremberg. He died in jail in 1987.

**Himmler, Heinrich (1900-1945):** As head of the SS and the secret police, Himmler had control over the vast network of Nazi concentration and extermination camps, the Einsatzgruppen, and the Gestapo. Himmler committed suicide in 1945, after his arrest.

**Von Hindenburg, Paul:** General Field Marshal who became a German national hero during World War I and was Reich president from 1925 to 1934.

**Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945):** Nazi party leader, 1919-1945. German Chancellor, 1933-1945. Called Führer, or supreme leader, by the Nazis.

**Hitler Youth:** was a Nazi youth auxiliary group established in 1926. It expanded during the Third Reich. Membership was compulsory after 1939.

**Holocaust:** Derived from the Greek *holokauston* which meant a sacrifice totally burned by fire. Today, the term refers to the systematic planned extermination of about six million European Jews and millions of others by the Nazis between 1933-1945.

**Homophobia:** Fear of homosexuals.

**International Military Tribunal:** The United States, Great Britain, France, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics chartered this court to prosecute Nazi war criminals.

**Jehovah's Witnesses:** Religious sect that originated in the United States and had about 2, 000 members in Germany in 1933. Their religious beliefs did not allow them to swear allegiance to any worldly power making them enemies of the Nazi state.

**Judenrat:** Council of Jewish "elders" established on Nazi orders in an occupied area.

**Judaism:** The monotheistic religion of the Jews, based on the precepts of the Old Testament and the teachings and commentaries of the Rabbis as found chiefly in the Talmud.

**Kapo:** A concentration camp inmate appointed by the SS to be in charge of a work gang.

**Kippah:** The skull cap worn by Jewish men. A Kippah is worn to symbolize that man exists only from his Kippah down; God exists above the Kippah.

**Korczak, Dr. Janusz (1878-1942) :** Educator, author, physician, and director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. Despite the possibility of personal freedom, he

refused to abandon his orphans and went with them to the gas chamber in Treblinka.

**Kristallnacht:** Also known as The Night of the Broken Glass. On this night, November 9, 1938, almost 200 synagogues were destroyed, over 8,000 Jewish shops were sacked and looted, and tens of thousands of Jews were removed to concentration camps. This pogrom received its name because of the great value of glass that was smashed during this anti-Jewish riot. Riots took place throughout Germany and Austria on that night.

**League of German Girls:** Female counterpart of the Hitler Youth formed in 1927 but not formerly integrated by Hitler until 1932.

**Lebensraum:** Meaning "living space," it was a basic principle of Nazi foreign policy. Hitler believed that eastern Europe had to be conquered to create a vast German empire for more physical space, a greater population, and new territory to supply food and raw materials.

**Madagascar Plan:** A Nazi policy that was seriously considered during the late 1930s and 1940s which would have sent Jews to Madagascar, an island off the southeast coast of Africa. At that time Madagascar was a French colony. Ultimately, it was considered impractical and the plan was abandoned.

**Majdanek:** Nazi camp and killing center opened for men and women near Lublin in eastern Poland in late 1941. At first a labor camp for Poles and a POW camp for Russians, it was classified as a concentration camp in April 1943. Like Auschwitz, it was also a major killing center. Majdanek was liberated by the Red Army in July 1944, and a memorial was opened there in November of that year.

**Marranos** Jews who professed to accept Christianity in order to escape persecution during the Spanish Inquisition. Marrano comes from the Spanish word "swine."

**Mein Kampf:** Meaning "My Struggle," it was the ideological base for the Nazi Party's racist beliefs and murderous practices. Published in 1925, this work detailed Hitler's radical ideas of German nationalism, antisemitism, anti-Bolshevism, and Social Darwinism which advocated survival of the fittest.

**Mengele, Joseph (1911-1979):** Senior SS physician at Auschwitz-Birkenau from 1943-44. One of the physicians who carried out the "selections" of prisoners upon arrival at camp. He also carried out cruel experiments on prisoners.

**Mitzvah:** Hebrew word meaning "a good deed."

**Muselmann:** German term meaning "Muslim," widely used by concentration camp prisoners to refer to inmates who were on the verge of death from starvation, exhaustion, and despair. A person who had reached the Muselmann stage had little, if any, chance for survival and usually died within weeks. The origin of the term is unclear.

**Napolas:** Elite schools for training the future government and military leadership of the Nazi state.

**Nationalism:** A movement, as in the arts, based on the folk idioms, history, aspirations, etc., of a nation.

**National Socialist Women's Association:** was an organization intended to recruit an elite group of women for the Nazis.

**National Socialist Teachers' Association:** Established in 1929, it assumed responsibility for the ideological indoctrination of teachers.

**The Nazi (National Socialist German Workers') Party:** or NSDAP was founded in Germany on January 5, 1919. It was characterized by a centralist and authoritarian structure. Its platform was based on militaristic, racial, antisemitic and nationalistic policies. Nazi Party membership and political power grew dramatically in the 1930s, partly based on political propaganda, mass rallies and demonstrations.

**Neuengamme:** Concentration camp located just southeast of Hamburg opened in 1940.

**Night of the Long Knives:** On June 30, 1934, Hitler murderously purged the ranks of the SA.

**Nuremberg Trials:** Trials of twenty-two major Nazi figures in Nuremberg, Germany in 1945 and 1946 before the International Military Tribunal.

**Nuremberg Laws:** The Nuremberg Laws were announced by Hitler at the Nuremberg Party conference, defining "Jew" and systematizing and regulating discrimination and persecution. The "Reich Citizenship Law" deprived all Jews of their civil rights, and the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor" made marriages and extra-marital sexual relationships between Jews and Germans punishable by imprisonment.

**Operation Barbarossa:** The code name for the German invasion of the Soviet Union which began on June 22, 1941.

**Operation Reinhard (or Aktion Reinhard):** The code name for the plan to destroy the millions of Jews in the General Government, within the framework of the Final Solution. It began in October, 1941, with the deportation of Jews from ghettos to extermination camps. The three extermination camps established under Operation Reinhard were Belzec, Sobibór, and Treblinka.

**Pale of Settlement:** The area in the western part of the Russian Empire in which Russian Jews were allowed to live from 1835-1917.

**Partisans:** Irregular forces which use guerrilla tactics when operating in enemy-occupied territory. During the Holocaust, partisans operated secretly in their efforts to assist Jews and others persecuted by the Nazis.

**Passover:** The Jewish holiday that commemorates the Jew's liberation from slavery in Egypt. The holiday, which lasts for eight days, requires all Jews to place themselves spiritually in the shoes of their ancestors and remember the era of bondage in order to never allow such oppression to happen again.

**Perpetrators:** Those who do something that is morally wrong or criminal.

**Plaszow:** Concentration camp near Kracow, Poland opened in 1942.

**Pogrom:** An organized and often officially encouraged massacre of or attack on Jews. The word is derived from two Russian words that mean "thunder."

**Porrajmos:** A Romani term referring to the Holocaust that means, "the devouring."

**Prejudice:** A judgment or opinion formed before the facts are known. In most cases, these opinions are founded on suspicion, intolerance, and the irrational hatred of other races, religions, creeds, or nationalities.

**Propaganda:** False or partly false information used by a government or political party intended to sway the opinions of the population.

**Protectorate:** Any state or territory protected and partially controlled by a stronger one.

**Rabbi:** Leader of a Jewish congregation, similar to the role of a priest or minister.

**Ravensbrück:** Concentration camp opened for women in 1939.

**Reich:** German word for empire.

**Reichskammern:** Reich government departments.

**Reichstag:** The German Parliament. On February 27, 1933, a staged fire burned the Reichstag building. A month later, on March 23, 1933, the Reichstag approved the Enabling Act which gave Hitler unlimited dictatorial power.

**Resettlement:** German euphemism for the deportation of prisoners to killing centers in Poland.

**Revisionists:** Those who deny that the Holocaust ever happened.

**Riefenstahl, Leni (b. 1902):** film director chosen personally by Hitler to make propaganda films for the Nazi regime, which include *The Triumph of the Will* (1935), *Olympia* (1938), and *Reichsparteitag* (1935).

**Righteous Gentiles:** Non-Jewish people who, during the Holocaust, risked their lives to save Jewish people from Nazi persecution. Today, a field of trees planted in their honor at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, Israel, commemorates their courage and compassion.

**Roosevelt, Franklin Delano:** Thirty-second president of the U.S., serving from 1933-1945.

**SA or Storm Troopers:** Also known as "Brown Shirts," they were the Nazi party's main instrument for undermining democracy and facilitating Adolf Hitler's rise to power. The SA was the predominant terrorizing arm of the Nazi party from 1923 until "The Night of the Long Knives" in 1934. They continued to exist throughout the Third Reich, but were of lesser political significance after 1934.

**Sachsenhausen:** Concentration camp outside of Berlin opened in 1936.

**Scapegoat:** Person or group of people blamed for crimes committed by others.

**SD:** The SS security and intelligence service established in 1931 under Reinhard Heydrich.

**Hannah Sennesh:** A Palestinian Jew of Hungarian descent who fought as a partisan against the Nazis. She was captured at the close of the war and assassinated in Budapest by the Nazis.

**Shoah:** The Hebrew word meaning "catastrophe," denoting the catastrophic destruction of European Jewry during World War II. The term is used in Israel, and the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) has designated an official day, called Yom ha-Shoah, as a day of commemorating the Shoah or Holocaust.

**Shtetl:** A small Jewish town or village in eastern Europe.

**Shull:** Yiddish word for synagogue, or Jewish house of prayer.

**Siddur:** The Hebrew name for the Jewish prayerbook.

**Sobibór:** Extermination camp located in the Lublin district of eastern Poland. Sobibór opened in May 1942 and closed the day after a rebellion by its Jewish prisoners on October 14, 1943. At least 250,000 Jews were killed there.

**Social Darwinism:** A concept based on the idea of "survival of the fittest." Based on Social Darwinism, Nazis created a pseudo-scientific brand of racism which was most virulent when directed against the Jews, but others, particularly Slavs, were not exempt.

**Socialism:** A theory or system of social organization that advocates the ownership and control of land, capital, industry, etc. by the community as a whole. In Marxist theory it represents the stage following capitalism in a state transforming to communism.

**Sonderkommando:** SS or Einsatzgruppe detachment. The term also refers to the Jewish slave labor units in extermination camps that removed the bodies of those gassed for cremation or burial.

**SS:** Guard detachments originally formed in 1925 as Hitler's personal guard. From 1929, under Himmler, the SS developed into the most powerful affiliated organization of the Nazi party. In mid-1934, they established control of the police and security systems, forming the basis of the Nazi police state and the major instrument of racial terror in the concentration camps and occupied Europe.

**Stalin, Joseph:** Secretary General of the Communist party 1922-1953 and Premier of the USSR from 1941-1953 during the Second World War. Life under Stalin's brutally oppressive regime was hard and often dangerous.

**Star of David:** A six-pointed star which is a symbol of Judaism. During the Holocaust, Jews throughout Europe were required to wear Stars of David on their sleeves or fronts and backs of their shirts and jackets.

**Stereotype:** Biased generalizations about a group based on hearsay, opinions, and distorted, preconceived ideas.

**Streicher, Julius:** Hitler's friend and founder of the antisemitic newspaper *Der Stürmer*.

**Stroop, Jurgen** (1895-1951) was the SS major general responsible for the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto in 1943. Later that year, as Higher SS and Police Leader in Greece, he supervised the deportation of thousands of Jews from Salonika. He was sentenced to death and executed in Poland in 1951.

**Der Stürmer:** newspaper founded by Hitler's friend, Julius Streicher, which reached a peak circulation of 500,000 in 1927.

**Stutthof:** Concentration camp founded in 1939 in what is now northern Poland.

**Sudetenland:** Formerly Austrian German-speaking territories in Bohemia which were incorporated into Czechoslovakia after World War I.

**Swastika:** An ancient symbol appropriated by the Nazis as their emblem.

**Synagogue:** Jewish house of worship, similar to a church.

**Tallis:** Jewish prayer shawl with fringes on four sides. These fringes represent the four corners of the world and symbolize God's omnipresence.

**Theresienstadt:** Nazi ghetto located in Czechoslovakia. Created in late 1941 as a "model Jewish settlement" to deceive the outside world, including International Red Cross investigators, as to the treatment of the Jews. However, conditions in Terezín were difficult, and most Jews held there were later killed in death camps. Theresienstadt is the German name for the town; Terezín is the Czech name.

**Third Reich:** Meaning "third regime or empire," the Nazi designation of Germany and its regime from 1933-45. Historically, the First Reich was the medieval Holy Roman Empire, which lasted until 1806. The Second Reich included the German Empire from 1871-1918.

**Torah:** A scroll containing the five books of Moses.

**Treaty of Versailles:** Germany and the Allies signed a peace treaty at the end of World War I. The United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy negotiated the treaty at the Peace Conference held in Versailles beginning on January 18, 1919. The German Republic government which replaced the imperial administration was excluded from the deliberations. The treaty created the Covenant of the League of Nations, outlined Germany's disarmament, exacted massive reparation payments from Germany, and forced Germany to cede large tracts of territory to various European nation-states.

**Treblinka:** Extermination camp on the Bug River in the General Government. Opened in July 1942, it was the largest of the three Operation Reinhard killing centers. Between 700,000 and 900,000 persons were killed there. A revolt by the inmates on August 2, 1943, destroyed most of the camp, and it was closed in November 1943.

**Umschlagplatz:** Place in Warsaw where freight trains were loaded and unloaded. During the deportation from the Warsaw ghetto, it was used as an assembly point where Jews were loaded onto cattle cars to be taken to Treblinka. It literally means "transfer point."

**Underground:** Organized group acting in secrecy to oppose government, or, during war, to resist occupying enemy forces.

**Volk:** The concept of Volk (people, nation, or race) has been an underlying idea in German history since the early nineteenth century. Inherent in the name was a feeling of superiority of German culture and the idea of a universal mission for the German people.

**Vught:** Concentration and transit camp in the Netherlands opened in January 1943.

**Waffen-SS:** Militarized units of the SS.

**Raoul Wallenberg:** A Swedish diplomat who deliberately stationed himself in Hungary during the war to save Hungarian Jews from their deaths.

**Wannsee Conference:** On January 20, 1942 on a lake near Berlin the SS official, Reinhard Heydrich, helped present and coordinate the Final Solution.

**Warsaw ghetto:** Established in November 1940, it was surrounded by wall and contained nearly 500,000 Jews. About 45,000 Jews died there in 1941 alone, as a result of overcrowding, hard labor, lack of sanitation, insufficient food, starvation, and disease. During 1942, most of the ghetto residents were deported to Treblinka, leaving about 60,000 Jews in the ghetto. A revolt took place in April 1943 when the Germans, commanded by General Jürgen Stroop, attempted to raze the ghetto and deport the remaining inhabitants to Treblinka. The defense forces, commanded by Mordecai Anielewicz, included all Jewish political parties. The bitter fighting lasted twenty-eight days and ended with the destruction of the ghetto.

**Wehrmacht:** The combined armed forces of Germany from 1935-1945.

**Weimar Republic:** The German republic, and experiment in democracy (1919-1933), was established after the end of World War I.

**Westerbork:** Transit camp in the Netherlands

**Yiddish:** A language that combines elements of German and Hebrew.

**Zionism:** Political and cultural movement calling for the return of the Jewish people to their Biblical home.

**Zyklon B:** (Hydrogen cyanide) Pesticide used in some of the gas chambers at the death camps.

University of South Florida, *A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust*, "Glossary," (2005) accessed 17 June 2016, <http://fcit.usf.edu/holocaust/resource/glossary.htm>.





