

Lesson 3

The Holocaust



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Setting the Stage

- As part of their vision for Europe, the Nazis proposed a new racial order. They proclaimed that the Germanic peoples, or **Aryans** were a “master race.” (This was a misuse of the term *Aryan*. The term actually refers to the Indo-European peoples who began to migrate into the Indian subcontinent around 1500 BCE.) The Nazis claimed that all non-Aryan peoples, particularly Jewish people, were inferior. This racist message would eventually lead to the **Holocaust**, the systematic mass slaughter of Jews. In addition, the Nazis murdered millions of other people they deemed inferior.

The Holocaust Begins

- To gain support for his racist ideas, Hitler knowingly tapped into a hatred for Jews that had deep roots in European history.
- **Anti-Semitism**, a hostility or prejudice against Jews, had existed in Christian Europe since the Middle Ages.
- For generations, many Germans, along with other Europeans, had targeted Jews as the cause of their failures.
- Some Germans even blamed Jews for their country's defeat in WWI and for its economic problems after that war.
- Hitler made the targeting of Jews a government policy. **The Nuremburg Laws** passed in 1935, deprived Jews of their rights to German citizenship and forbade marriages between Jews and non-Jews.
- Laws passed later also limited the kinds of work that Jews could do.

“Night of the Broken Glass”



Kristallnacht

- Early in November 1938, 17-year-old Herschel Grynszpan, a Jewish youth from Germany was visiting an uncle in Paris. While Grynszpan was there, he received a postcard. It said that after living in Germany for 27 years, his father had been deported to Poland.
- On November 7, wishing to avenge his father's deportation, Grynszpan shot a German diplomat living in Paris.
- When Nazi leaders heard the news, they used this pretext to launch a violent attack on the Jewish community.
- On November 9, Nazi storm troopers attacked Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues across Germany and Austria and murdered close to 100 Jews.
- Using the practice of **ethnic cleansing**, they rounded up 30,000 Jews and sent them to concentration camps, where many died.
- The night of November 9 became known as *Kristallnacht*, or “Night of Broken Glass,” and marked the beginning of **the Holocaust**.

JEWES ARRESTED DURING *KRISTALLNACHT*



#5

As you read about the Holocaust, use the following questions to help summarize information in this section. Pgs. 535-541

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|---|---|
| <p>1. Who?</p> <p>a. Who were the victims of the Holocaust?</p> <p>a. Who were members of the “master race”?</p> | <p>4. Why?</p> <p>a. Why did Hitler believe that Jews and other “subhumans” had to be exterminated?</p> <p>b. Why did the Germans build extermination camps?</p> |
| <p>2. What?</p> <p>a. What were the Nuremburg Laws?</p> <p>a. What was Hitler’s Final Solution?</p> | <p>5. When?</p> <p>a. When did the final stage of the Final Solution begin?</p> |
| <p>3. Where?</p> <p>a. Where did German Jews try to migrate to find safety from Nazi terror?</p> <p>b. Where were Jews forced to live in German-controlled cities?</p> <p>c. Where were the concentration camps?</p> | <p>6. How?</p> <p>a. How did non-Jewish people try to save Jews from the horrors of Nazism?</p> <p>b. How many Jews died in the Holocaust?</p> |

Concentration Camps



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Auschwitz Concentration Camp Film

- Click on the link to view the short 7 minute film:

Auschwitz Untold: In Color | What Happened Right Before Jewish Concentration Camps Were Liberated?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6Fk2v0zQFU>

