

Year 9 History Unit 2 Why should the Holocaust not be represented by numbers?

Key Questions

- 1) What was life like for Jews before the Holocaust?
- 2) How did the lives of German people change in Hitler's Germany?
- 3) How did persecution of Jewish people escalate during World War Two?
- 4) How did the Nazis carry out the final solution?
- 5) How was Nazi persecution resisted?
- 6) Why is the story of Anne Frank significant in understanding the Holocaust?
- 7) How much can be learnt from the Survivors of the Holocaust?

Key Topics

- 1) Life for Jews before the Holocaust.
- 2) The Origins of Persecution
- 3) Increasing persecution
- 4) Auschwitz and the camps
- 5) Resistance
- 6) Anne Frank's diary
- 7) Holocaust Survivors

KEY KNOWLEDGE

- In places such as Britain, France and Germany, the majority of Jews lived alongside non-Jews in large towns and cities – there was no such thing as shtetls. Partly because of this, Jewish communities in the west were often **less traditional** than those in the East.
- They could go to university, vote, and work in many different jobs—some even became doctors, lawyers, and politicians. Some Jews became very wealthy and influential, like the **Rothschild family**, who were famous bankers in France, Germany, and Britain.
- In a country of 67 million people, German Jews were a very small minority. They made up less than 1 per cent of the population - just 525,000 people.
- After Germany lost World War I in 1918, some people claimed the German army hadn't really been defeated in battle. Instead, they said Germany was betrayed by people back home—especially politicians, communists, and Jews—who supposedly “stabbed the army in the back”.
- 1935 The Nuremberg Laws- all Jews had their German citizenship removed. They could not vote. Marriages and sexual relationships between Jews and non-Jews were punishable by imprisonment. Marriages that had already taken place were declared invalid.
- November 1938 Kristallnacht (the ‘Night of the Broken Glass’) was a night of anti-Jewish violence, 9th-10th November. Many people took part in the violence, but the government played a critical role. The police were ordered not to interfere as thousands of shops, synagogues and homes across Greater Germany were destroyed or damaged. The Nazi government forced Jewish communities to pay for all the damage that had occurred. Meanwhile, nearly 100 Jewish people were killed.
- To try to deal with what the Nazis saw as a Jewish ‘problem’ in occupied Poland, Reinhard Heydrich ordered that Jews should be moved to certain areas of towns and cities which would become ghettos.
- On 20 January 1942, fifteen leading Nazis and German officials met at a villa near Berlin. The Wannsee Conference was a meeting to discuss how different government departments would work together to deport Jewish people from across Europe and take them to the death camps.
- In **October 1941**, construction began on Auschwitz II (Birkenau), located about 3 km from the original camp. It was **purpose-built** to serve as an extermination camp, with large gas chambers and crematoria designed for industrial-scale murder, primarily of Jews deported from across Europe.

Term	Definition
<u>Key Terms</u>	
Shtetls	These were the little towns where Jews lived in Eastern Europe. Life in these areas tended to be very traditional
Pogroms	Sometimes Jews who lived in Shtetls were attacked in violent riots called pogroms.
Ghettos	These were created by the Nazis in occupied Poland to replace the Shtetls. The ghettos were sealed off from the rest of the world and Jewish people could not leave or contact the outside world.
Untermensch	The Nazis believed that the people of the Soviet Union and the Jews were Untermensch (subhuman)
Einsatzgruppen	The Einsatzgruppen were mobile killing units of the Nazi SS, tasked primarily with mass shootings of Jews, Roma, communists, and other perceived enemies in Eastern Europe. They were formed by Heinrich Himmler and operated mainly during the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, following the German army to carry out systematic massacres.
Chelmno	The first death camp, set up by Herbert Lange. 250 Jews who could not be used for slave labour were gassed. On 8 December 1941
Wannsee Conference	On 20 January 1942, fifteen leading Nazis and German officials met at a villa near Berlin. The Wannsee Conference was a meeting to discuss how different government departments would work together to deport Jewish people from across Europe and take them to the death camps.
Genocide	The targeted killing of one race

Assessment

Skill **Interpretation** : Identify the Key message in two different interpretations and explain how and why they might be different.

Possible Tasks

- Which groups did the Nazis identify as enemies and why? How were they persecuted?
- Describe the way of life for Jews in the ghettos, referring to work, food and living conditions.
- What were the long-term, short-term and trigger causes of the Final Solution?
- What does the story of Leon Greenman tell us about the Holocaust?
- Which groups did the Nazis identify as enemies and why? How were they persecuted?
- Describe the way of life for Jews in the ghettos, referring to work, food and living conditions.
- What were the long-term, short-term and trigger causes of the Final Solution?

STRETCH AND CHALLENGE

- **Create a poster or Powerpoint** on a resister on the significance of a Holocaust resister or survivor such as Nicholas Winton, Janusz Korczak, Irene Sandler, the Village of Chabon, Mustafa and Zejneba Hardaga, Zigi Shipper, Erica Schwartz, Janine Webber. Give a presentation to the History Society
- **Read** The Road from Home (Armenia) by David Kheridan, The Cat I never named by Amra Sabic El R, ayes, Forgotten Fire by Adam Bagdarsarian , Once by Morris Gleitzman, Milkweed by Jenny Spinelli, The Weaver's Scar by Brian Crawford , Rose under Fire by Elizabeth Wein