

Knowledge Organiser: Who were the perpetrators and victims of the Holocaust?

Topic Summary:

This topic the events of the Holocaust. You will learn how this genocide of six million Jewish people was carried out between 1933 and 1945, and investigate the similarities and differences in how it impacted Jewish people, who the perpetrators were and whether they were brought to justice.

Key Dates:

30 January 1933:
Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany

9 November 1938:
Kristallnacht – a state-sponsored night of terror against German Jews

20 January 1942:
The Wannsee Conference is held

27 January 1945:
Auschwitz concentration camp is liberated by Soviet soldiers.

September 1935:
The Nuremberg laws are passed, banning Jews from being German citizens











1 September 1939:
Germany invades Poland, bringing millions of Jews under its control

July – November 1942:
1.5 million Jews are murdered in the deadliest phase of the Holocaust

Key People:

	<p>Adolf Hitler Leader of Germany, 1933-1945. Highly anti-Semitic and prone to political violence, Hitler led and was responsible for the Holocaust.</p>
	<p>Adolf Eichmann A senior SS office who was responsible for the deportation of Jews across Europe to concentration camps.</p>
	<p>Rudolf Hoess The commandant of Auschwitz, Hoess oversaw the murder of 400,000 Hungarian Jews in two months in 1944.</p>
	<p>Hermann Goering A senior Nazi who created the Gestapo, directed the Luftwaffe and directed economic policy.</p>

Vocabulary:

Holocaust		The genocide of six million Jewish people in Europe by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933-45.
Perpetrator		those who were responsible for the Holocaust, due to the power they held or the choices they made.
Collaborator		those who cooperated with the Nazis, typically outside of Germany, to help the Nazis enact their racist policies.
Persecution		mistreating or being hostile to a person or group based on ethnicity, religion or political belief.
Kristallnacht		A pogrom (violent attack) against German and Austrian Jews on 9-10 November 1938. In Germany, the word Novemberpogrom is often used to describe this event.
Ghetto		Ghettos during the Holocaust were areas of towns or cities in certain parts of Europe where Jews were forcibly move to
The 'Final Solution'		The Nazis' attempts, after 1942, to murder all of Europe's Jews using either gas chambers or mass shootings.
Resistance		Standing up against something that you believe is wrong or immoral.
Liberation		The act of being freed; Jewish (and non-Jewish) concentration camp prisoners were liberated in 1945.
Justice		ensuring that laws, rules, and social customs are maintained in a fair and reasonable manner.

Core Knowledge:

Lesson 1: What was the Holocaust?	The Holocaust was the genocide of six million Jewish people in Europe by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933-45. A genocide refers to attempts to fully or in part erase a group of people of their identity. Some Jewish people prefer the term Shoah (Hebrew for 'catastrophe') to describe the events of 1933-1945.
Lesson 2: How were Jews persecuted in Nazi Germany	The persecution of Jewish people began almost immediately after the Nazis took power in Germany in January 1933, through laws designed to limit German and Austrian Jews' rights and freedoms . The persecution became more violent after Kristallnacht in 1938 , which saw Jewish homes, shops and synagogues attacked and 30,000 Jews sent to concentration camps .
Lesson 3: How were ghettos used to continue the Holocaust?	When the Nazis occupied a country in Europe, they often forced Jewish people to relocate to smaller, poorer parts of cities, called ghettos . Some were larger, some were smaller, and some were contained by walls. In all cases, Jews were transported from ghettos at some point to concentration camps in Eastern Europe .
Lesson 4: What was the 'Final Solution'?	At the Wannsee Conference in early 1942 , senior Nazi officials met and decided to use gas chambers and mass shootings to attempt to murder all of Europe's 11 million Jews. The most infamous death camp is Auschwitz , where 1.1 million Jews were gassed to death by 1945.
Lesson 5: How did Jews try to resist during the Holocaust?	Resistance was very difficult for the many Jews caught up in the Holocaust. Some, such as in the Warsaw Uprising, attempted armed resistance , but many Jews tried to resist by saving others – especially babies and children -, recording Nazi crimes , and preserving cultural and religious life , for example by educating children or putting on secret theatre performances.
Lesson 6: What were the impacts of liberation on survivors and liberators?	As defeat drew closer, many concentration camps in Eastern Europe were evacuated. Prisoners were forced on long ' death marches ' deeper inward in Germany. By 1945, many camps were liberated, and 250,000 prisoners ended up in refugee camps . Liberation was very confusing and challenging for both survivors and for the soldiers / doctors / nurses who liberated and treated them.
Lesson 7: To what extent was there justice for perpetrators and survivors after the Holocaust?	Many senior Nazis, including Hitler, either committed suicide or were captured and executed / imprisoned after 1945. However, it was more challenging to know how to deal with the millions of lower-ranking Nazis (and non-Nazi officials) who contributed in some way towards the Holocaust . Whilst some faced justice, including execution / imprisonment, others escaped, served only short jail terms, or were never tried for their crimes.
Lesson 8: How did Zigi Shipper attempt to rebuild his life after the Holocaust?	Holocaust survivors faced many challenges after the Holocaust; it was often not possible for them to return to their previous lives as they had lost loved ones, their homes, and even their identities . Zigi Shipper was a Polish Jew who, having survived the Holocaust, begins a new life in Britain. In 2007, he begins working with the Holocaust Education Trust, telling his story to students across the UK.

What do historians say?

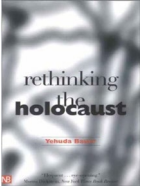


Christopher Browning, lecture at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

“After several decades of debate, historians have reached relative consensus on a number of important points concerning the decisions for the Final Solution. First, there was no single decision, no “big bang,” that produced the Final Solution. Rather, there were a series of decisions taken incrementally; the decision-making process was cumulative and prolonged.

Yehuda Bauer, *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective*

“Between 1941 and 1945, the Nazi regime embarked on a deliberate policy of mass murder that resulted in the deaths of nearly six million Jews. What the Nazis attempted was nothing less than the total physical annihilation of the Jewish people. This unprecedented atrocity has come to be known as the Holocaust.”



How can I find out more?

Podcast: *12 years that shook the world* (USHMM)



Documentaries / films:

- Memories of the Holocaust (BBC)
- Simon Schama: The Road to Auschwitz (BBC)
- Denial (Youtube / Sky)

