

## What was the Holocaust?

1	How do people define the Holocaust?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Holocaust was the attempt, by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, to annihilate the Jewish people.</li> <li>Almost six and a half million Jews were killed by a number of means. Around the same number of people from other backgrounds were also killed by the Nazis at this time</li> </ol>
2	What problems are there with defining the Holocaust?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people believe that Jews are the only people who can be considered 'victims of the Holocaust' as they were the only people explicitly targeted for annihilation.</li> <li>Other groups suffered persecution and murder by the Nazis and so many people view all of the Nazis' victims as 'Holocaust victims'.</li> <li>Some people do not like the word Holocaust and prefer terms such as 'Shoah' (catastrophe or 'Churban' (destruction).</li> </ol>
3	Which other groups were targeted by the Nazis?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many groups who were political or moral opponents of the Nazis such as trade unionists and Jehovah's Witnesses.</li> <li>Other groups who did not fit into the Nazi plans for Germany, such as gay men and disabled children and adults.</li> <li>Soviet prisoners of war were also killed in large numbers.</li> <li>Roma-Sinti, Polish people and Jews were targeted for racial reasons.</li> </ol>

## Jewish life in Europe

1	When were Jews persecuted in Europe and who by?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jews lived in every country in Europe and many suffered persecution at different times, from ancient times onwards.</li> <li>Jews were not always persecuted during this time but it was a common theme.</li> </ol>
2	What happened to Jews in Europe?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Jews were successful members of European societies.</li> <li>However, in other places Jews were often criticised or made aware that they were an unpopular minority.</li> <li>Jews had laws passed against them or were killed.</li> <li>In the 20<sup>th</sup> century Zionists believed that Jews should leave Europe and set up a homeland in Palestine.</li> </ol>
3	Why was there often prejudice against Jews?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jews were often persecuted for not being Christian. They were accused of killing Jesus or lies were told about them killing Christian children for religious reasons.</li> <li>Jews were the only people in society allowed to lend money at interest and so people often hated them, because they owed them money.</li> <li>Kings and politicians were able to increase their own popularity by blaming Jews for problems and encouraging attacks on them.</li> </ol>

## The events of the Holocaust

1	What did the Nazis do when they came to power?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Hitler's 1925 book Mein Kampf he said that the Jewish people should be driven out of Germany.</li> <li>In 1933 the Nazis came to power and brought in laws targeting Jews. These laws became more intense after the Nuremberg Laws of 1935.</li> </ol>
2	How did Kristallnacht change attitudes to Jews?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kristallnacht was a violent pogrom against Jews that showed the Nazis would allow Jews to be mistreated.</li> <li>Laws against Jews became more harsh afterwards.</li> </ol>
3	What policies did the Nazis pursue against Jews?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At first the Nazis just tried to get Jews to leave Germany. Many went to the USA or other countries in Europe.</li> <li>Some came to Britain on the Kindertransport.</li> <li>Jews were increasingly placed in ghettos. Other ideas such as moving them to Madagascar did not happen.</li> </ol>
4	How did the Second World War change the Nazi approach?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 1941 invasion of Russia opened up land in Eastern Europe that Jews could be moved to.</li> <li>The war was brutal and this enabled Nazis to get away with murdering Jews. However, shooting them and other methods of murder proved to be difficult.</li> <li>The 'Final Solution' was proposed at the Wannsee meeting in 1942.</li> </ol>

## What are the key misconceptions about the Holocaust?

1	Was Hitler to blame for the Holocaust?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hitler was the leader of the Nazi state and definitely knew about the Holocaust and approved of it, but did not 'plan' or supervise it.</li> <li>Individual Nazis either organised or carried out the Holocaust by choice. People who did not want to kill Jews were not punished or made to.</li> </ol>
2	Why didn't the Jews fight back?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many non-Jewish people spoke out against the Holocaust or helped to rescue Jews.</li> <li>Many Jews did fight back physically, such as the Bielski partisans of Belarus.</li> <li>Other Jews rebelled in camps or ghettos, or tried to stop the Nazis carrying out plans in other ways.</li> </ol>
3	Was the Holocaust all about the gas chambers?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The death camps were only one part of the Holocaust and only existed during the 'Final Solution'.</li> <li>Many people died in concentration camps where they were worked to death or killed, but not gassed.</li> <li>Any site where people were victimised by the Nazis is a Holocaust site.</li> </ol>

Key word	Definition
<b>Holocaust</b>	The attempt by Nazi Germany and its collaborators to murder all Jews.
<b>Antisemitism</b>	Prejudice directed towards Jews.
<b>Usury</b>	Lending money for interest.
<b>Ghetto</b>	A location in which Jews were confined and forced to live.
<b>Blood libel</b>	The belief that Jews used the blood of Christian children in religious rituals.
<b>Zionist</b>	A Jew who believed the Jews had an eternal homeland in Palestine and should live there.
<b>Sabbath</b>	The Jewish day of worship and rest.
<b>Kosher</b>	Food that is prepared in accordance with Jewish religious rules.
<b>Nuremberg Laws</b>	Laws passed in 1935 that showed the Nazi state was explicitly antisemitic.
<b>Kristallnacht</b>	A violent 1938 riot against Jews also known as the 'Night of Broken Glass'.
<b>Kindertransport</b>	A scheme by volunteers to bring Jewish refugee children to Britain by ship.
<b>Polenaktion</b>	The law of 1938 that required all Polish Jews in Germany to 'return' to Poland even if they were born in Germany.
<b>Partisan</b>	A fighter who was not part of an army.
<b>Sonderkommando</b>	Jews who were given jobs in camps such as clearing away bodies. They were still killed after a short time.
<b>Concentration camp</b>	A Nazi work camp for Jews and other victims of persecution or opponents of the regime.
<b>Death camp</b>	One of six camps designed purely for industrial killing. Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chelmno, Majdanek, Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor (all in Poland).
<b>Final Solution</b>	The decision to move from random attacks on Jews to a system of organised and industrialised killing..