

Unit 19 How and why did the Holocaust happen?

About the unit

In this unit pupils learn about how and why the Holocaust happened. Its main emphasis is developing pupils' understanding of historical concepts, such as cause and consequence, and their ability in higher order 'thinking skills'. Teachers are strongly advised to follow the guidance on selecting of suitable materials for this subject, contained throughout the 'Points to note'.

Care will need to be taken to be sensitive to pupils who may find aspects of this unit deeply upsetting.

This unit is expected to take 8–11 hours.

Where the unit fits in

This unit is an in-depth study which links directly to the preceding unit 18 'Twentieth-century conflicts'. It builds on work about culture clashes in earlier units. It also acts as an introduction to the teaching of several issues relating to citizenship and democracy.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: show knowledge of how and why the Holocaust happened including the chronology of the Holocaust and the way the persecution of Jewish people developed over time; describe some of the ideas and attitudes underpinning the Nazi persecution of the Jews and other groups; make critical and thoughtful use of a range of sources of information about the Holocaust, including ICT; select, organise and use relevant information in structured explanations of the Holocaust

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: demonstrate knowledge of some aspects of the Holocaust; describe some of the key events and developments; identify links between contemporary beliefs and the Holocaust; recount stories of individuals who were Holocaust victims; select and combine information when describing the Holocaust

some pupils will have progressed further and will: demonstrate detailed knowledge of the causes and course of the Holocaust; analyse relationships between the Holocaust and other features of the period; analyse different stages of the Holocaust including initial Nazi persecution, ghetto life and the Final Solution; make critical use of a range of sources to reach substantiated conclusions about the Holocaust; use a wide range of technical vocabulary in their knowledge and understanding

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- studied the treatment of the Jews as part of their consideration of medieval Britain
- studied other examples of persecution and mistreatment of particular groups
- used and evaluated a range of historical sources
- considered questions of cause and consequence
- produced structured explanations of historical events based on critical research

Language for learning

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- Holocaust concepts, *eg Ghetto, Final Solution*
- attitudes, *eg discrimination, prejudice*
- values, *eg racism, interpretation*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils could:

- ask different sorts of questions to extend thinking and refine ideas

Reading – through the activities pupils could:

- recognise the author's standpoint and how it affects the meaning

Resources

Resources include:

- a large wall-mounted map of Europe
- appropriate visual material from contemporary sources, *eg photos, posters, drawings, newsreels*, and from secondary sources, *eg TV/ video, slides*
- accounts by survivors, including audio accounts, memoirs and poetry
- appropriate material relating to commemoration/remembrance days, *eg Anne Frank, Auschwitz*
- websites, *eg www.annefrank.nl (Anne Frank House) and www.remember.org* (please note that, while extensive sources are available on websites, these should be used with great care as many contain racist or denial material; it is strongly recommended that any website information is preselected and downloaded by the teacher)

Out-of-school learning

Pupils could visit regional Holocaust exhibitions, or national Holocaust memorials and exhibitions, *eg Beth Shalom, Imperial War Museum, London Jewish Museum, Manchester Jewish Museum, Wiener Library in London*.

Future learning

This in-depth study of the Holocaust can be built upon in many ways. At key stage 4 the programme of study for citizenship provides scope for developing some of the issues explored in this unit.

In developing their understanding of causation, pupils can be provided with further examples of complex issues where there are also issues of morality.

Rights and responsibilities?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about some key concepts, values and dispositions underpinning their own treatment within school • that 'rights' imply 'responsibilities' • that democracies have ways of safeguarding an individual's rights and responsibilities • that people's access to human rights can be removed by, for example, the actions of a totalitarian regime | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the question <i>What are our own rights and responsibilities and how are they protected?</i> Introduce the topic by using the context in which the pupils find themselves at school, <i>eg use a copy of the school's mission statement or home – school agreement to identify rights and responsibilities</i>. Ask pupils to undertake a DART (directed activities related to text)-style exercise, underlining phrases within the document that relate to their 'rights', <i>eg right to achieve, to be safe, to receive support</i>. • Through questions and answers, establish a spidergram of rights and link this to a spidergram of responsibilities. • Prompt pupils if significant ones are not covered, <i>eg the right to be treated equally regardless of race, sex, religion, disability</i>. • Ask the question <i>How are pupils' rights protected and how are pupils' responsibilities expressed?</i> Discuss the various ways in which pupils' rights are protected in school, <i>eg school rules (protection against what?); and anti-bullying and racist incident procedures</i>. Extend the discussion to include rights in a democratic society and how citizens are protected through laws, parliament, etc. • Ask the question <i>How are people's rights being denied?</i> Topical news items can be introduced through appropriate media where individual or group human rights are most obviously being denied, together with the opportunity to discuss the basis for their denial. This could act as a springboard into a discussion of the denial of human rights within Hitler's Germany. • Ask pupils to construct an 'overlay' to the spidergrams, demonstrating how these rights and responsibilities can be denied to individuals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify key aspects of an individual's rights and responsibilities within a representative democracy • make links between an individual's rights and responsibilities within a representative democracy • demonstrate an understanding of how an individual's rights and responsibilities can be denied | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship: this provides a context for discussing the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society. • Homework or additional class activity: pupils could examine the UN Declaration of Human Rights. • Pupils will be familiar with DARTs through work in English. Similar strategies are used in earlier units. • Links can be made with units covering culture clashes and the denial of human rights, <i>eg unit 6 'Islamic civilisations 600–1600', unit 10 'France 1789–94', unit 13 'Mughal India 1526–1857', unit 14 'The British Empire', unit 15 'Black peoples of America' and unit 17 'Divided Ireland'</i>. |
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Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

Rights denied: why was Anne Frank forced to go into hiding?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about Anne Frank and her life in Nazi-dominated Europe • that Anne Frank's plight was caused by Nazi attitudes towards, and actions against, the Jews • to identify key steps in the withdrawal of human rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the extent of pupils' prior knowledge of the story of Anne Frank, summarising pupils' responses. Ask pupils to use a chronologically structured storyboard to record the main events from the discussion, leaving gaps as necessary. • Provide pupils with extracts from Anne Frank's diary to complete the storyboard. • Through class discussion, focus back to the sub-question and, using the storyboard, establish how, when, where and why the Frank family were denied their rights. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recall, select and organise key incidents from Anne Frank's life story and represent it in storyboard format • analyse the withdrawal of human rights from the Frank family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide variety of audio-visual and ICT resources exists on Anne Frank and her family. A number of websites also offer useful material, but care must be taken in accessing websites as many contain racist material and Holocaust denial material. • Anne Frank's story offers an accessible way into the study of the Holocaust – by focusing upon one individual's fate, and the reasons for it, the millions of (largely unknown) other individual stories may be (partly) comprehended. However, the prominence given to Anne Frank, almost as a 'celebrity' victim, carries its own dangers, <i>eg the Frank family were not especially devout followers of the Jewish faith; few other Jews were able to resist deportation and rely upon 'rescuers' to the same degree, therefore very few were able to exercise as much 'choice' over their own destiny.</i> • As an alternative, teachers may wish to focus this activity on a less well-known family, such as an Orthodox family from Lodz in Poland for whom sources of information are available from Holocaust societies, or an individual, such as Kitty Hart, Elie Wiesel or Primo Levi. |
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Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

Rights denied: how did Nazi persecution of the Jews develop?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the treatment of Jews in Nazi Germany • that the Nazi military conquests of much of Europe and Soviet Russia brought millions more Jews under their direct control • that, through Nazi eyes, Jews represented a 'problem' and a 'threat' which required a 'solution' • to use prior knowledge and further information to suggest possible explanations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell pupils, in outline (using the world in the 1920s and early 1930s as context), about the rise to power of Hitler and the Nazis. • Use textbook and video resources to identify steps in Nazi persecution of the Jews before the Second World War, such as the Nuremberg Laws 1935 and <i>Kristallnacht</i>. Pose the question <i>Why did the outbreak of war in 1939 increase the suffering of Jewish and other non-Aryan groups?</i> • Draw on pupils' knowledge of the events of the Second World War to suggest reasons. • Provide further pieces of information for pupils to consider, such as population statistics of Jews in European countries, maps of occupied countries, the start of enforced sterilisation in October 1939, etc. • Ask pupils to study pieces of information and suggest reasons why some events led to an increase in measures against the Jews. Ask pupils to record their conclusions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain some consequences of laws against the Jews in Nazi Germany • use sources of information to suggest a tentative explanation of why the Nazis intensified their persecution of the Jews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity is designed to ensure that pupils have sufficient background knowledge to events leading to the Holocaust, which began 'officially' in 1941 with the decision to implement the Final Solution – <i>Endlösung</i>. It is not intended to be a detailed study of Nazi Germany, although teachers might want to develop some aspects further. • The use of sources, including videos, outlining the consequences for a Jewish family living in Germany in the 1930s will help pupils to understand the impact of both laws and events. • Pupils will be able to draw on their knowledge of the Second World War from work undertaken in unit 18 'Hot war, cold war'. • It is important that pupils are aware that anti-Jewish behaviour was not restricted to Nazi Germany. Examples could be provided from other periods/countries, <i>eg medieval England, nineteenth-century Russian pogroms, the Dreyfus case in France, other twentieth-century European countries</i>. • Citizenship: this work encourages pupils to think about political, spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. |
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Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

How and why were ghettos set up and what was life like inside them?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the Nazis established ghetto areas for Jews in many major European cities • to use a range of sources to find out about life in a Jewish ghetto after about 1942 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show pupils a visual source, <i>eg child/ghetto scene</i>. Ask pupils to analyse the source for information and inferences, and draw up a list of questions pupils would like to ask of the source. • Alternatively, the same exercise could be undertaken through the testimony of a survivor from a ghetto. • Tell pupils about the designation of certain European city areas as ghettos. Explain why and show maps/plans/photographs as appropriate. • Show a video extract about life in a ghetto <i>eg feature film extract, slide archive, or photographic evidence</i>. From visual material, observe and classify images in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – their organisation – their conditions (health/housing/hygiene/diet) – their work – their treatment by Nazis • Supplement the visual sources with a range of written source material, as appropriate. • Ask pupils to draw conclusions about life in a Jewish ghetto and record them with reference to supporting evidence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask and answer questions relating to a visual source about a ghetto • show an understanding of the reasons why the Nazis created ghettos for Jews • draw supported conclusions from a range of source material about life in a Jewish ghetto | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In selecting from the wide range of source material relating to life in ghettos, care should be taken to differentiate clearly between fact and fiction, which in itself can be a useful extension exercise. This activity can be based on sources from different ghettos, or can focus on a specific ghetto. • A map of Europe, showing Nazi-occupied lands by the end of 1941 and those towns where ghettos were established, will be helpful. Links can be made with unit 18 'Hot war, cold war'. |
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What was the Final Solution?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about what the Nazis meant by the term the 'Final Solution' and the creation of death camps in Eastern Europe • about forced deportation and the organisation of the camps • to plan and carry out short investigations and summarise findings for a particular audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show pupils a short feature film extract, or TV documentary extract to show an arrival at a death camp. • Build pupils' knowledge-base through the creation of a spidergram with the 'Final Solution' at its centre, with appropriate explanations to emerge through pupil questioning. Opportunities to unpack pupils' misconceptions should be actively sought, <i>eg all new arrivals were gassed, only Jews were deported and exterminated, all 'concentration camps' were 'death camps'</i>. • Divide pupils up into 'expert groups' to undertake brief research into one aspect per group, <i>eg clearing the ghettos, deportation by rail, arrival and selection</i>. Ask pupils to report back their findings, by way of a presentation, to the rest of the class. • Lead a class discussion to clarify main points and to respond to issues which pupils might wish to raise. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a combination of source material to provide specific evidence of one aspect of the 'Final Solution' • demonstrate accurate knowledge of the treatment of the Jews and of other groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind pupils, as appropriate, that Nazi persecution was not just of the Jews, but of other minorities, <i>eg gypsies, homosexuals</i>. • As with all visual images of the death camps, a sensitive balance needs to be sought between wanting pupils to know and understand what happened, to whom, how and why, and avoiding piling up images of horror which are degrading and disrespectful to the memory of the human beings involved. • Contact can be made with organisations which have links with survivors of the Holocaust to arrange a talk by a camp survivor in school. Alternatively, a number of videos exist which can be adapted for this same purpose. • Citizenship: this work provides a context for pupils to think about topical political, spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, problems and events. • Key skills: these activities provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate evidence of communication (discussion) and working with others. |
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Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

What happened when people found out about the Holocaust?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the ways in which the Allied liberation of the camps revealed the full horror of the Holocaust, and the evils of the Nazi regime • to explain contemporary Allied attitudes to those involved in running the death camps • to assess the immediate and longer-term effects of the death camps through the sources, including the recollections of Holocaust survivors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Richard Dimbleby's news report on the 'Liberation of Belsen', or similar news footage, to introduce the question. Focus initially on what happened to the Nazis involved in running the death camps. Explain the attitudes of the Allies to (a) major players and (b) minor participants. Ask pupils to discuss/debate the appropriateness of treatments and to focus on the Nuremberg Trials, the fate of those industrialists who collaborated with, and profited from, the Nazi regime and the problems associated with survivors' claims on their property. Provide pupils with copies of contemporary newspaper articles and ask them to identify the attitudes they indicate. • Explain that after liberation many camp survivors found themselves in 'displaced persons' camps in Germany run by the Western Allies. Although they had survived the Holocaust, many survivors were faced with a new set of problems. Present the pupils with a series of statements on cards. In pairs, discuss these statements and arrange them to show the effect on an individual survivor, by using a concentric circles 'ripple-diagram' device. • Use appropriate video/audio extracts and/or read a selection of Holocaust poetry, eg <i>'Shipment to Maidanek'</i> by E. Fogel; <i>'Never shall I forget'</i> by E. Wiesel; <i>'I saw a mountain'</i> by M. Szulstein, to conclude this section. • Help pupils to identify the feelings and attitudes expressed, and to consider how a historian might use these sources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe and explain contemporary attitudes to those responsible for the death camps • demonstrate an understanding of the impact of death camps on their inmates • represent the effects of surviving the Holocaust upon individuals by presenting thoughts in a diagrammatic format • identify reasons for the post-war difficulties of displaced persons • recognise an author's standpoint and how it affects the meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care is required in preselecting visual images that do not simply seek to produce a 'shock effect' among pupils. • If appropriate, as part of the study of the trials, reference can be made to statements by leading Nazis about their attitudes to the camps' victims. • The theme of 'displaced persons' caused by the Holocaust, leading in due course to examples of immigration to a great many nations – most notably the newly established state of Israel, can be developed in relation to other mass migrations of peoples and consequent multicultural assimilations or conflicts. • Statements relating to the survivors may include coming to terms with things they have witnessed, feelings of 'guilt' for having survived, a lack of information about the whereabouts of family and friends, the loss of pre-war possessions, etc. • The use of poetry written by survivors provides an opportunity for links with English and for building on work on comparable poetry, such as that from the First World War. • Citizenship: the discussion of the treatment of war criminals can be compared with a current example. This would contribute to pupils' understanding of issues of fairness and justice. |
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Exploring the Holocaust – what questions and issues remain?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to explore a range of questions relating to our understanding of the Holocaust, and to understand that the answers to them have not necessarily been found • about the role of individuals and organisations in maintaining and opposing the Holocaust • to research a question and reach a conclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the pupils one or two questions, <i>eg Why didn't the Jews resist?</i> As a class discuss responses and collect these to display as a wall poster. • Using a range of appropriate resources, and working in groups, ask each group of pupils to investigate one main topic, via structured worksheets, to explore and explode stereotypes. Topics could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>How did the Jews resist?</i> – <i>Did any individuals try to offer rescue and shelter?</i> – <i>Why didn't the Allied governments do more to help?</i> – <i>Why didn't the German people do more?</i> – <i>Why didn't the Christian churches do more to resist the Holocaust?</i> – <i>What happened in occupied lands, such as the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, the Channel Islands?</i> • Ask pupils to present their work, in a format chosen by the group, to the rest of the class, and give the class opportunities to ask questions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify questions about the Holocaust that remain unanswered • select, organise and deploy information relating to one aspect of the Holocaust • recognise that there are complex reasons for actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues for the group work are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to provide a range of resources in sufficient depth for the pupils to acquire relevant information to assist their research – to ensure each group has a sound structure for the enquiry and sufficient guidance on events/issues to cover, <i>eg the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, rescuers such as Oscar Schindler and Raoul Wallenberg, extent of Allied knowledge of the concentration camps</i> – to allow pupils the opportunities to display their findings according to their research area • Key skills: the group work will provide opportunities for evidence of working with others. • Language for learning: pupils ask different sorts of questions to extend thinking and refine ideas, <i>eg Does that imply ...?, Does that mean ...?, Would we need to ...?</i> • ICT: pupils can be presented with structured worksheets on file with preset internet links to relevant sites. Pupils might be encouraged to choose an appropriate ICT format to present their group's work to the rest of the class. |
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Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

So, how and why did the Holocaust happen?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to analyse and evaluate the causes of the Holocaust • to select, organise and use relevant information to produce a structured narrative on the Holocaust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils can draw up a concept map to show what they have learned. Prompt pupils to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – anti-Semitism in Germany and Europe – Hitler's racist ideas – Nazi propaganda – wartime conditions – collaboration – indifference – science and technology • Encourage pupils to add other factors, and make labelled links and connections as they see fit. • The concept map can be used as the basis and structure for a piece of summative, supported writing to answer the overarching question. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse and evaluate the causes of the Holocaust • select, organise and deploy information to answer the overarching question | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section is a deliberate attempt to direct pupils' thinking back to the original key question. Concept maps are a useful way for the pupils to reveal their understanding of the topic at a deeper level than simply the recall of information or comprehension. According to which concepts the pupils select, where they locate them in relation to one another and how they make links and labelled connections between them all, much is revealed – in diagrammatic format – about their respective levels of understanding. Concept maps represent a useful tool for assessment. Such a task may be an effective homework. • ICT: the concept maps could be produced using ICT, to enable pupils to make adjustments and prioritise factors. |
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