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*THE WAY WE SAW IT*

# THE HOLOCAUST

IN ILLUSTRATION AND ART

A Teachers'  
Resource Booklet

with Lesson Plans and Reproducible  
Student Activity Assignments



INCLUDES **IMAGEXAMINER™**

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The well-crafted lessons in MindSparks materials use editorial cartoons, photos, and other visuals to generate spirited yet carefully ordered classroom interactions. The materials are primarily booklets with the ImageXaminer included on CD-ROM. These curriculum supplements cover all major areas of the social studies, with some literature-based materials of interest to language arts teachers. MindSparks products are content-rich materials using visual primary source documents to promote classroom discussion, small-group interaction, and individual student research projects.

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# Introduction

## Teaching the Holocaust

In recent years, educators have seen a flood of new teaching materials on the Holocaust. These materials are helping to pass on to the next generation an awareness of this terrible moment in human history. Yet because there are so many approaches to teaching about the Holocaust, educators are often faced with the problem of how to choose among them.

Therefore, it may help you to understand our approach clearly. The goal of some curriculum units and materials is to treat the Holocaust as a way to raise awareness about the evils of genocide and prejudice in general. Others stress the unique nature of the Holocaust, teaching it mainly in order to keep the memory of it alive and vivid. Our approach leans toward this latter view. We think it crucial for students to grasp the unique aspects of the Holocaust in order to fully understand it. However, we do also feel that students must be challenged to relate the Holocaust to their concerns about their own life and times. Hence, while the images and discussion questions in this booklet focus on the nature of the Holocaust itself, many follow-up activities ask students to relate what they learn to their own lives and their own society.

MindSparks materials use still images to bring history to life. In the case of the Holocaust, this presents some problems. In a way, the historical record of Nazism and the Holocaust is *too* visual. The overpowering horror of this visual record makes it difficult to avoid sensationalism, or to know know exactly what youngsters can handle emotionally. Many of the illustrations in this booklet are quite grim. Yet we have tried to avoid using the most gruesome images, while not sanitizing the truth that students need to grasp. We hope this helps to promote the kind of thoughtful and reflective response the Holocaust demands of all of us. The twelve illustrations in the booklet are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three of these illustrations to explore one broad topic in the overall story. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

### **The Rise of Hitler**

The illustrations focus attention on the militaristic and totalitarian nature of the Nazi regime. That regime was not simply authoritarian. It was a tyranny of the mass spectacle and the total elimination of the individual.

### **The Anti-Semitic Mentality**

The three images in this lesson together reveal most of the key elements in the anti-Semitic ideology that was used to justify the “Final Solution.”

### **From Segregation to the “Final Solution”**

The pre-war forms of discrimination and oppression were only a prelude to the events that make the Holocaust unique, the systematic and planned elimination of an entire people for no real reason at all.

### **The Aftermath**

The focus here is on the relative burdens of guilt born by Germany’s leaders, its citizens, and the rest of the world. A final image asks students to find reasons for hope in Jewish resilience and renewal.

## Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Most textbooks today are full of colorful visuals. But all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. But only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

## How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

**A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET** This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

**CD-ROM WITH IMAGES** The ImageXaminer allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions. The CD-ROM also includes a folder containing all of the discussion questions and follow-up questions in pdf format. All of the images are also in pdf format, should you wish to create overhead transparencies.

### **DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS FOR EACH ILLUSTRATION**

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while viewing the images in the ImageXaminer. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments, while others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

The Holocaust

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**OBJECTIVES  
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will better understand the unique power of Adolf Hitler as a dictator and the Nazi form of totalitarianism he imposed on Germany.
- 

# The Rise of Hitler

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:**

**Illustration 1**

In the early 1930s, democratic Germany was thrown into chaos and destroyed by an Austrian World War I veteran named Adolf Hitler. In the 1920s, bitterness over the unfair settlement of World War I moved some to join Hitler's National Socialist German Workers Party, the "Nazis." Then, the hard times of the Great Depression swelled that support to a near-majority in elections in 1932. In 1933, Hitler became Germany's top leader, its Chancellor. What his Nazis proceeded to create was not an ordinary dictatorship, but a truly "totalitarian" society. These photos convey its unique character. Hitler appears as one of his men, yet also raised high above them. His rigid stance, salute, uniform and bearing convey the idea of unbending authority and total power. This cult of power was celebrated in huge spectacles, such as the rally on the right. The individual disappeared into a disciplined mass, a militarized nation in which all independent thought and feeling was to be eliminated.

**Illustration 2**

Book burnings were organized by the Nazis as another kind of mass spectacle. Books were seized and burned by the thousands in huge nighttime bonfires such as this one. The Nazis taught that Germany had been poisoned by un-German ideas. Huge torchlight parades and book burnings like the one shown here could not destroy every banned book in Germany. The book burnings were really a kind of ritual, in which people acted to purify the nation. Among the books burned were those by communist revolutionaries such as Karl Marx or V. I. Lenin. But they also included many far less radical authors — Ernest Hemingway, for example, Thomas Mann, Sinclair Lewis, and Hellen Keller.

**Illustration 3**

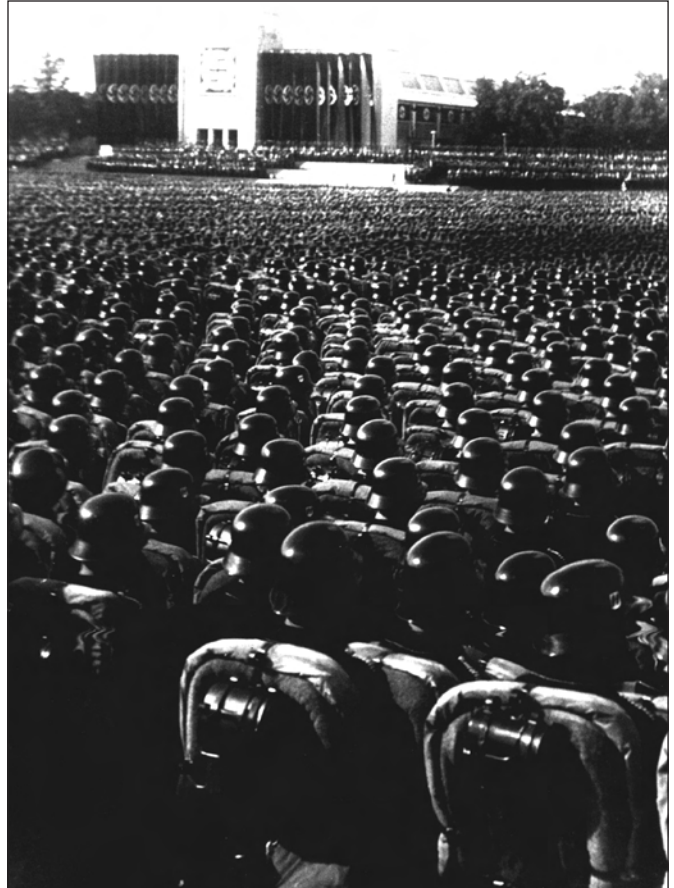
All aspects of life in Germany were organized to glorify the Nazis and support their goals. This drive for totalitarian control led the Nazis to stress education and youth. So, too, did their worship of physical strength. The young children in this photo are members of Hitler Youth. In addition to Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls, the schools, universities, army, media, even the churches fell under Nazi control. Together, they made it impossible for individuals to escape the control of the all-powerful state, even inside their own families and homes.



# Illustration 1



The National Archives



The National Archives

## ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. The photo on the left is of one of the most terrifying leaders ever to come to power in all of history. He is the man standing with his arm extended out rigidly. Can you name him and the nation he once led?
2. The photo shows Hitler in 1928 at a big rally for the political party he then led. That party was called the National Socialist German Workers Party. By what shorter name did the world come to know Hitler's party and his followers in Germany?
3. In 1928, Hitler had not yet taken complete control of Germany's government. When did he get that control?
4. After taking power in Germany, the Nazis continued to hold big rallies, such as the one on the right. From these two photos, what can you tell about Hitler and the kind of leader he was? That is, what do the photos alone show you about him, about his leadership, and about the kind of nation the Nazis wanted Germany to become?

## ***Follow-up Activities***

1. Small Group Activity: Together the two photographs shown above reveal a good deal about the nature of the Third Reich, the government Hitler set up. Your group's task is to carefully select five to ten more photos, drawings, posters, or other visuals for a bulletin board display designed to explain to young children what they most need to know about Hitler, the Nazi movement, and the Third Reich. Ask your librarian to help you locate books with photos and other visuals on the Hitler era. Do some reading on your own about Nazi Germany. Discuss the visuals you find, and choose ten images carefully with their educational value for young children in mind. Write simple explanations of each image and link them together to tell a single, easily understood story. If you can make good copies of the images, use them along with your explanations to create a well-organized display.



## Illustration 2



The National Archives

### ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. This is another kind of rally that the Nazis held in Germany after they came to power. How can you tell this photo is of a Nazi rally or march of some sort?
2. The people in this crowd are cheering and giving the Nazi salute as they watch a huge bonfire. What do you think they are burning in this fire?
3. In 1933, the Nazis collected thousands of books from libraries and schools and burned them in huge bonfires like this one. Why do you think the Nazis wanted to ban and destroy so many books? Can you guess what kinds of books they were most likely to ban and destroy?
4. Some historians say the real purpose of rallies like this one wasn't just to get rid of certain books. They say it was also to get more Germans to support the Nazis, while also frightening anyone who did not support them. Why might book burning rallies like this one do that? What other methods did the Nazis use to excite the German people and win their support?

### ***Follow-up Activities***

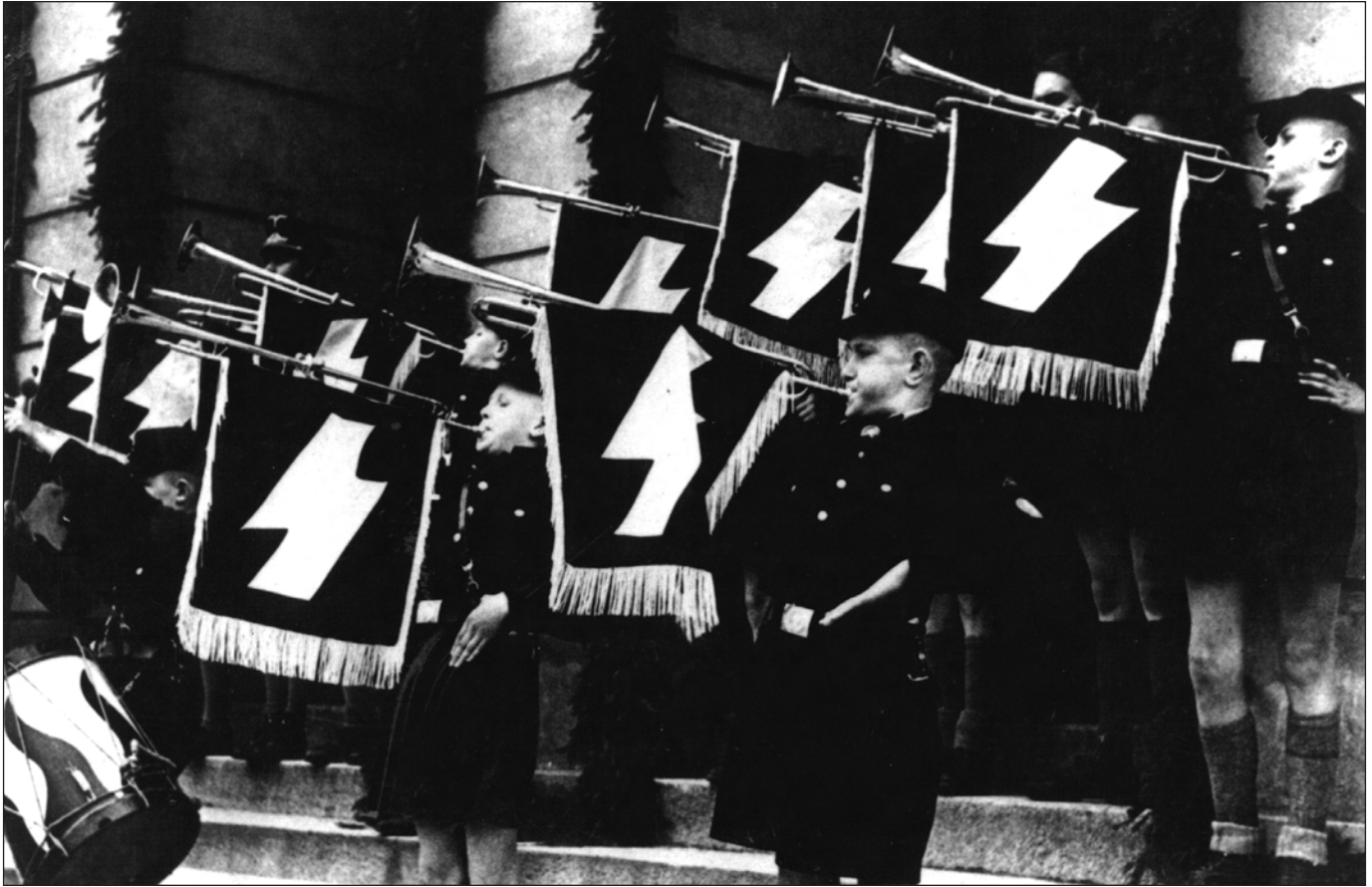
1. Small Group Activity: Some of the authors whose books were destroyed in Nazi book burning ceremonies were the following:

Ernest Hemingway	Helen Keller
Theodore Dreiser	John Dos Passos
Upton Sinclair	Jack London

Why were the Nazis determined to stop people from reading books by these authors? Each member of your group should read a book by one of these authors and learn more about that author. Discuss the books and authors, and as a group decide why the Nazis would have wanted to ban all of them. Share your findings in a brief report to the class.

2. Small Group Activity: Collect recent lists of best sellers, and ask your librarian to help you find book reviews of these books. As a group, discuss what you learn about the books. Choose the five you think the Nazis would most likely have banned. Present your choices to the class and discuss them.

## Illustration 3



The National Archives

### *Discussing the Illustration*

1. The youngsters in this 1941 photograph belonged to an organization called Hitler Youth. What do you know about Hitler Youth? From the photo, what do you suppose the main activities and purposes of the Hitler Youth organization were?
2. What do you suppose were the emotions or feelings of the boys you see here at the time this photograph was taken? Explain
3. At age ten, a German boy would first join a group called German Young People. Then at 13, he could become a member of Hitler Youth. He had to follow a strict set of rules and learn Nazi teachings until the age of 18. Parents could have little involvement with the organization. Why do you suppose this program appealed to many young German boys? What do you suppose their parents felt about it?

### *Follow-up Activities*

1. Read more about Hitler Youth and the Nazi girl's organization known as the League of German Girls. Summarize the main kinds of activities for boys and girls in these organizations. What were they, how much time did they take up, and what purpose were they supposed to serve? Based on what you learn, write a brief essay on the basic goals the Nazis had for the youth of Germany. Explain how these two organizations were designed to help achieve those goals. Explain also why the training for girls differed from the training for boys. Finally, give your own views as to how effective these organizations were likely to be with young people.
2. Pretend that you were one of the boys in this photo. Read more about Hitler Youth and the history of the Nazi era. Pretend it is the present, and you are an elderly German citizen. You have just discovered this photo in an attic. Write a long diary entry on your thoughts about the photo and what you feel about it now. Be as imaginative as you can.

The Holocaust

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**OBJECTIVES  
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will understand the nature of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda and its use by the Nazis to justify their power as well as their plans for the “Final Solution.”
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# The Anti-Semitic Mentality

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:**

**Illustration 1**

It is impossible to understand the Holocaust without studying closely the ugly ideas about Jews that were widespread in Germany in the 1930s. These anti-Semitic ideas were among the most hateful forms of racism the world has ever known. They had existed in Europe for a long time. But under Hitler, they were openly displayed everywhere as the official views of the government. This cartoon presents a very old anti-Semitic myth. That myth was the belief that Jews kidnapped and killed young Christian children as part of an evil ritual. The cartoon also exaggerates facial characteristics that set some East European Jews off from others. These characteristics — thick jowls, hooked nose, heavy eyeglasses — were standard features in the stereotype of Jews that portrayed them as ugly, deformed, almost subhuman, and envious of the blond, youthful and vigorous German people.

**Illustration 2**

But Nazi anti-Semitism did more than portray individual Jews as less than human. It also pictured a vast Jewish conspiracy to take over the world. In the late 1800s, Jews escaping persecution in Russia settled in other parts of Europe, where they were often seen as aliens with goals of their own. Jewish involvement in trade and finance fed stereotypes of a conspiracy of Jewish bankers to take over the world. Here, the Jews are shown as a huge octopus clutching at a bleeding world.

**Illustration 3**

This book cover combines the facial stereotypes of Illustration 1 with a different kind of monster symbol, a mushroom. The title of this Nazi book about Jews was “The Poisonous Mushroom.” A mushroom is a fungus that feeds off of other living matter. Hence this mushroom metaphor conveys another aspect of anti-Semitism in Hitler’s Germany: the idea that the Jews were parasites who lived off the vital energies of other races. Anti-Semitic racism did not say the Jews were less intelligent than others. In fact, it even suggested they were smart, or at least very clever. Jews supposedly had no real culture or society of their own. But they knew how to take over and live off of other cultures. These ridiculous yet powerful ideas were what allowed so many Germans to accept the evil of the Holocaust when it finally arrived.



## Lesson 2 — The Anti-Semitic Mentality

# Illustration 1



Gichner, courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

“Here little one, have some candy!  
But for that you’ll have to come with me...”

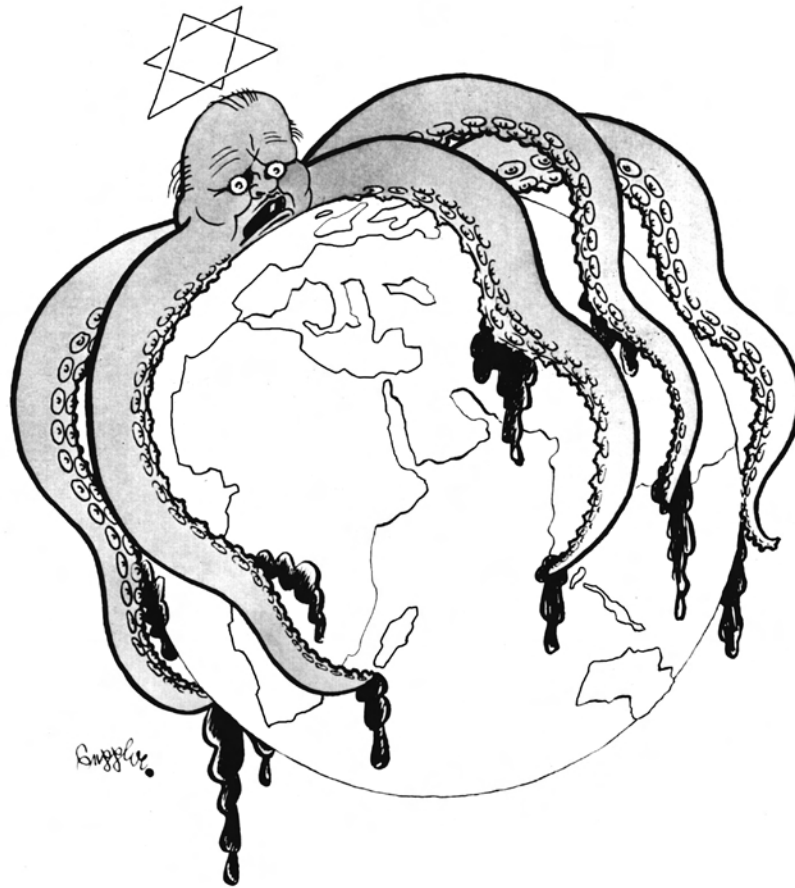
### Discussing the Illustration

1. This Nazi cartoon is one of many that appeared in newspapers in Germany during the time of Hitler. It is about the group that would soon become the victims of the Holocaust. What group is that?
2. The scene in this cartoon seems to repeat an ugly lie that had long been a part of stereotypes about Jews in Europe. What is a stereotype? For centuries, Jews had been accused of stealing Christian children and killing them in strange and secret rituals. Why do you think Europeans believed such stories?
3. The word “anti-Semitic” is used for deeply unfair ideas about the Jews. Adding to the anti-Semitic stereotype here is the way the Jewish man’s facial features are drawn. What facial features are exaggerated in this cartoon? Have you ever heard Jews described in this way?
4. Why do you think the facial features or general appearance of a group so often becomes a part of hateful stereotypes about that group?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: Cartoons can be amusing. But like the one above, they can also be cruel. Some editorial cartoons use stereotypes simply to identify a group. For example, a cartoon about scientists might show an older man with glasses wearing a white lab coat. Some cartoon stereotypes can be critical without being insulting. After all, editorial cartoons do stir up debate, and it’s often hard to do that without angering those who disagree. So it’s not easy to decide whether a cartoon stereotype is being critical to make an important point, or being pointlessly cruel and insulting. Your group’s task is to find recent editorial cartoons that portray groups in various ways and make your own judgments about how those groups are portrayed. First, collect many recent cartoons and discuss them. Then choose ten to use in a brief talk. Find some that criticize groups or individuals in order to make a valid point, and some that are unfair or needlessly insulting. Explain your group’s choices in a brief classroom talk.

## Illustration 2



The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This cartoon illustrates another aspect of Nazi anti-Semitism. What object in it stands for the Jews?
2. In this cartoon, a giant octopus clutches the entire world. What does this suggest about the Jews as a group? How does the use of the octopus help the cartoon make this point about the Jews?
3. A key anti-Semitic notion stressed by the Nazis was that the Jewish people had a secret plan to take over the whole world. This Jewish conspiracy was said to involve a large group of powerful and wealthy Jewish bankers. Why do you think anti-Semitic ideas in Europe so often had to do with money and banking?
4. The Jewish conspiracy was often portrayed as being led by Jewish bankers. But after 1917, it was also often pictured as a Bolshevik plot. Why would a plot by world bankers and Bolsheviks be especially unlikely? Why do you suppose so many people believed such an unlikely idea?

### Follow-up Activities

1. In the early 20th Century a strange document called "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion" came out of Russia and was spread around the world. It was supposed to be a plan for Jewish world domination. Actually, the document was a hoax. But millions of people believed it. Read more about the "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion" and prepare a brief talk about it to present in class. In your talk, discuss the document and explain how it might make cartoons like the one above seem more believable.
2. Small Group Activity: Not all forms of group hatred are the same. Your task is to use the above cartoon as a way to compare and contrast certain forms of prejudice and stereotyping. Each member should read more about hatred directed at one of these groups: African Americans, Immigrants, Catholics, poor people, Asians. Discuss what you have learned with the rest of the class, and compare the above cartoon to stereotypes commonly used to depict each of the five groups you have researched.

## Illustration 3



Gichner, courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This is the cover of a book published in Germany in 1935. The book is called “The Poisonous Mushroom.” From the stereotyped facial features of the figures on the cover, can you guess what group is being compared to a poisonous mushroom?
2. What qualities of mushrooms do you suppose the author had in mind in comparing the Jews to mushrooms? Why might such a comparison have added to hatred toward the Jews in Germany in the 1930s?
3. In what ways is this stereotype about the Jews similar to stereotypes that have commonly been held about other racial, ethnic, or religious groups? In what ways is this stereotype different from other stereotypes?
4. One big problem with any visual image is its ability to create powerful feelings in the viewer *even* when the viewer knows the image is not real or accurate. Do you think this visual image has that power? Why or why not?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Adolf Hitler expressed his anti-Semitic ideas in his book *Mein Kampf*. Read this book and take notes on Hitler’s ideas about the Jews. Prepare a report on these ideas using all three of the illustrations for this lesson. Organize your talk so that you use each illustration as an example or as a way to explain one aspect or another of Hitler’s anti-Semitism. After your presentation, lead the class in a discussion about why Hitler believed these ideas and why so many Germans came to accept them as well.
2. Still images like these were only one among many forms of Nazi propaganda. Radio, film, newspapers and all other forms of media were controlled and used, as were the huge rallies and public rituals of the Nazi regime. An important Nazi propaganda film called *The Triumph of the Will* is available. Show this film in class. After it, discuss the film and the three illustrations in this lesson. Also, talk about why still and moving visual images in general can be so effective as forms of political propaganda.



The Holocaust

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**OBJECTIVES  
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will understand how discrimination against Jews in Germany in the 1930s created a climate that led during World War II to the unbelievable horrors of “the Final Solution.”
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# From Segregation to “the Final Solution”

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:**

**Illustration 1**

In the 1930s, the entire world suffered from the terrible economic collapse known as the Great Depression. In many countries, millions lost their jobs as businesses shut down. Germany was one of the hardest hit. But Hitler’s complete take over of the state enabled him to force the German economy into growing again. And so for a few years, most Germans were happy with Hitler — except, that is, for Germany’s Jews. Jews were set apart from others. In public, they had to wear a Star of David identifying them as Jews. All of their political rights were taken away. Thugs were encouraged to beat them and attack their homes. Their businesses were boycotted and shut down. This 1933 photo shows a Nazi standing guard at a Jewish store in Berlin. The sign says “Germans defend yourselves, do not buy from Jews.”

**Illustration 2**

World War II gave Hitler the excuse for putting his “Final Solution” for the Jews into effect. The Final Solution was the complete destruction of the Jews as a people. But it was not enough for Hitler simply to wipe the Jews off the face of the earth forever. Nazi concentration camps seemed to have an additional purpose. They were designed to work and starve Jews into complete submission in order to take away all of their freedom and dignity. Perhaps in doing this the Nazis hoped to prove to themselves once and for all that Jews really were less than human. The Nazi camps experimented in creating little totalitarian societies, with every human movement under constant control.

**Illustration 3**

Jews were not the only ones sent to the concentration camps. Millions of Gypsies, Poles, Russians and others seen as inferior were also killed in them. But the Jews, especially, were targeted for total elimination. First they were herded into cramped ghettos, and later into the “death camps” — Auschwitz, Sobibor, Treblinka, and the others. Families were separated. A few survived for weeks or more. Most were immediately stripped naked — men, women, and children. They were lined up and sent to showers that were actually gas chambers. Afterwards, with cold, bureaucratic efficiency, everything left was saved and stored: shoes, clothing, teeth fillings, and more — including the gold rings in this photo.



## Illustration 1



The National Archives

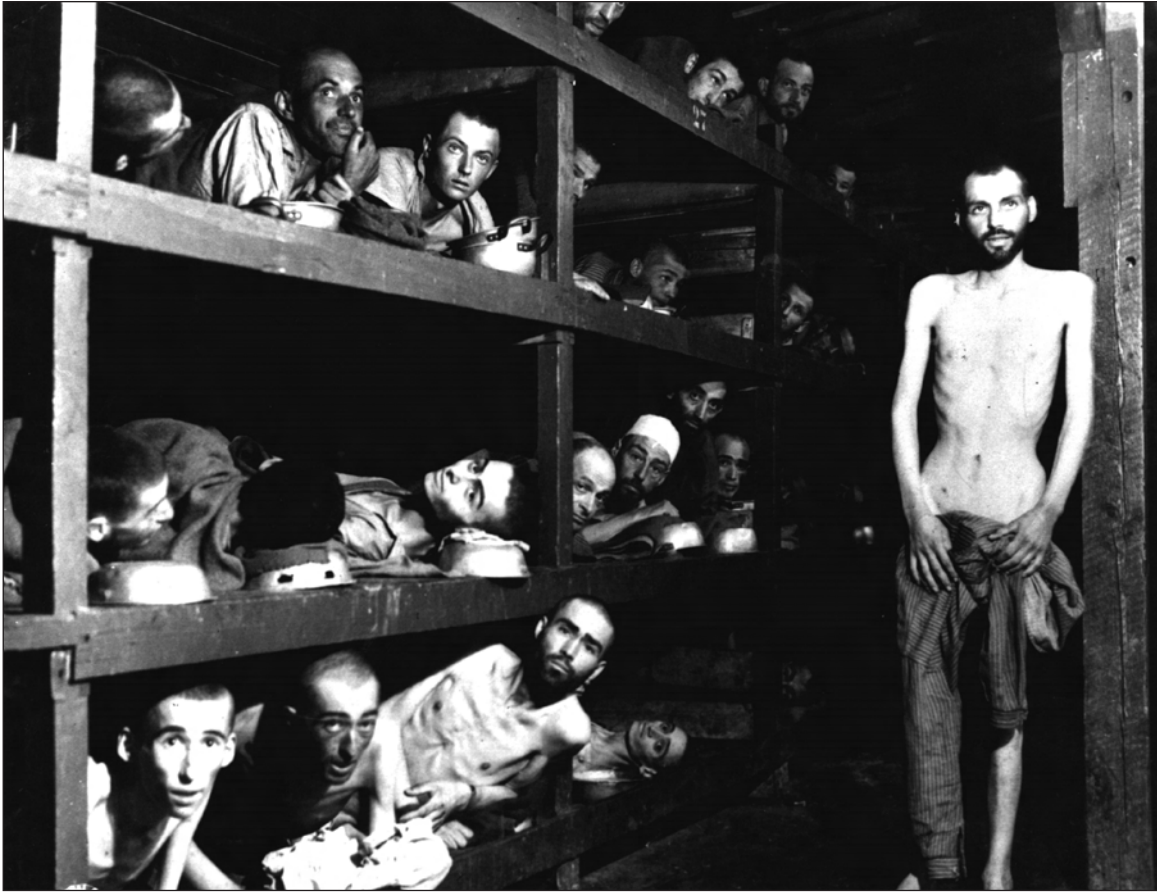
### Discussing the Illustration

1. This photograph was taken in the spring of 1933, just after Hitler took power in Germany. It shows a Nazi storm trooper standing guard outside a store. From your knowledge about the Nazi movement, can you explain who the storm troopers were?
2. This Nazi storm trooper is standing guard at a Jewish-owned store in Berlin. What have the Nazis done to show that this store is owned by a Jew?
3. The sign attached to the store window reads: "Germans defend yourselves, do not buy from Jews." Why do you think the Nazis called on people to stop buying goods in Jewish owned stores? What do you think they meant by the phrase "Germans defend yourselves"?
4. Boycotting Jewish stores was actually one of the milder things the Nazis did to make life difficult for Germany's Jews in the 1930s. What other kinds of actions did the Nazis take against Jews in the years before World War II?

### Follow-up Activities

1. The above photograph was taken in 1933. Two years later, Germany put the Nuremberg Laws into effect. Read more about the Nuremberg Laws. How did they add to the problems Jews already faced in Hitler's Germany? Pretend you are the owner of the store shown in this photograph. It is early 1936, write a long letter to a Jewish relative in the United States. In the letter, explain what life is like now in Germany and why you do or do not want the relative to help you leave Germany and move to another country.
2. Small Group Activity: For Jews, November 9, 1938, is known as *Kristallnacht*, the "Night of Broken Glass." Ask your librarian to help you find books that describe *Kristallnacht*. Try to find some first-hand accounts of this event. Also, find and make copies of photographs of *Kristallnacht* and of other aspects of the Nazi persecution of the Jews in the 1930s. Use the photos and written accounts in a bulletin board display called "The Fruits of Prejudice: Germany 1933-1939."

## Illustration 2



The National Archives

### Discussing the Illustration

1. Germany began World War II by attacking Poland in September of 1939. Millions died in the fighting in that war. But the war gave Hitler the chance to do something even worse. It gave him the chance to begin his so-called “Final Solution” to the Jewish problem. Frightening photos like this help to show, in part, what that Final Solution was. From the photo and your own knowledge of history, can you explain what this Final Solution was to be?
2. This photo was taken by U.S. soldiers at the end of World War II. When did that war end? The photo shows some starving slave laborers in the Buchenwald concentration camp. What are your reactions to this photograph? What do you think it helps to show about the Holocaust? What kinds of suffering in camps of this sort does it NOT show?
3. As horrible as Buchenwald was, it was not among the worst camps, the so-called “death camps, like Auschwitz. Can you explain why those camps were even worse?

### Follow-up Activities

1. One man in this photo, Eli Weisel, later became a very well-known writer on the Holocaust. Read Eli Weisel’s book *Night*. How does the photograph help you to better understand Mr. Weisel’s ideas in that book? How does the book help you to better understand what the photo shows?
2. Small Group Activity: It is difficult to know how to discuss the Holocaust with very young children. For example, would you show children ages 6-9 this photo? It is actually not as upsetting as many others about the Holocaust. As a group, look through books on the Holocaust that contain photographs showing what happened. Your librarian should be able to help you locate several. As a group, choose ten to fifteen photos that you think would be suitable to show to children ages 6-9 as part of a lesson explaining the Holocaust to them. Write an outline of what you would say in showing the photos to these children. Share your outline and your photos in a class discussion about this problem.

## Illustration 3



The National Archives

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This photograph may not seem nearly as awful as the last one, showing inmates in Buchenwald. Yet in some ways it is even worse. The photo shows a U.S. soldier sifting through a box filled with thousands of gold wedding rings. The box was found near Buchenwald. Can you guess who the owners of these rings were and what happened to them?
2. Why do you suppose some people find photos like this of the Holocaust just as upsetting as photos like the last one of starving inmates? Do you agree with people who react to this photo this way? Why or why not?
3. The Nazis killed more than six million Jews for no real reason at all. Millions of other innocent people were also killed in the Nazi camps. Afterwards, the Nazis recorded and carefully stored their victims' clothes, shoes, jewelry, even teeth fillings. This photo shows one of the items stored. What, if anything, do you think the photo adds to your understanding of the Holocaust?

### Follow-up Activities

1. History is full of horrible acts of slaughter and oppression. But some say the Holocaust is unique. Michael Berenbaum\* lists four principles that define this uniqueness. He says the Holocaust ...

- *was intentional and premeditated.*
- *was total and all-encompassing.*
- *served no political or territorial purpose.*
- *was sanctioned by law and official decrees.*

Read Berenbaum's complete description of these four principles. Then learn more about one of the following tragic historical episodes:

- Turkey's massacre of Armenians in 1915
- Stalin's effort to eliminate the Kulaks in the 1930s
- Spain's conquest of Mexico in the 1500s
- King Philip's War in New England, 1677-1678

Write a brief essay on the episode you chose. Apply Berenbaum's four principles to it and comment on his view of the uniqueness of the Holocaust.

\* *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust as Told in the United States Holocaust Museum*, Michael Berenbaum (Little Brown and Company, 1993), pages 105-107.



*The Holocaust*

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**OBJECTIVES  
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will discuss and debate the question of guilt for the Holocaust.
  2. Students will reflect on the lessons of the Holocaust for all of us today.
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# The Aftermath

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*Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.*

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:****Illustration 1**

More than six million Jews perished in the concentration camps, along with millions of other innocent people. World War II was itself the most destructive war in history. Yet the world was still shocked when it finally learned what the Nazis had done in these camps. Hardened GIs who had fought their way across Europe broke down and cried when they came upon the camps. A desire arose to force Germans to face what had been done in their name. Many ordinary German citizens, such as the woman in this photo, were paraded through the camps to see the results of the Nazi tyranny. In the years after the war, the Allies, along with many Germans, worked to bring Germany to face its Nazi past and rid itself of the hatreds that brought the Nazis to power.

**Illustration 2**

After the war, an effort was also made to punish those most to blame for the Holocaust. At Nuremberg, 22 Nazi leaders were tried for crimes against humanity. Twelve were sentenced to die. This cartoon about those trials uses the swastika symbol to suggest that Nazism itself held the seeds of its own destruction. Many people agreed with efforts to hold Germans responsible for the Holocaust. Still, not every German knew what was being done in the camps. And a few brave Germans even tried to save Jews when they could. On the other hand, some leaders in the Western democracies *did* know what was happening, yet did little about it. Perhaps not much could have been done. But in fact, very little was even tried.

**Illustration 3**

One false idea is the notion that Jews accepted their fate in the camps quietly. Under Nazi totalitarianism, it was rarely possible to speak a word of protest. Yet people often did do what they could to resist, or at least give some comfort to other victims. At times, Jews fought bravely and hopelessly, as in the 1943 uprising in Poland's Warsaw ghetto. In the end, the Holocaust left many Jews with a strong will to survive and thrive. For some, such as the three in this photo, that meant leaving for Palestine, the Biblical homeland of the Jews. Jews will never forget the Holocaust. But in 1948, with the founding of Israel, millions of Jews began to turn their attention to renewal and to the future.

## Illustration 1



The National Archives

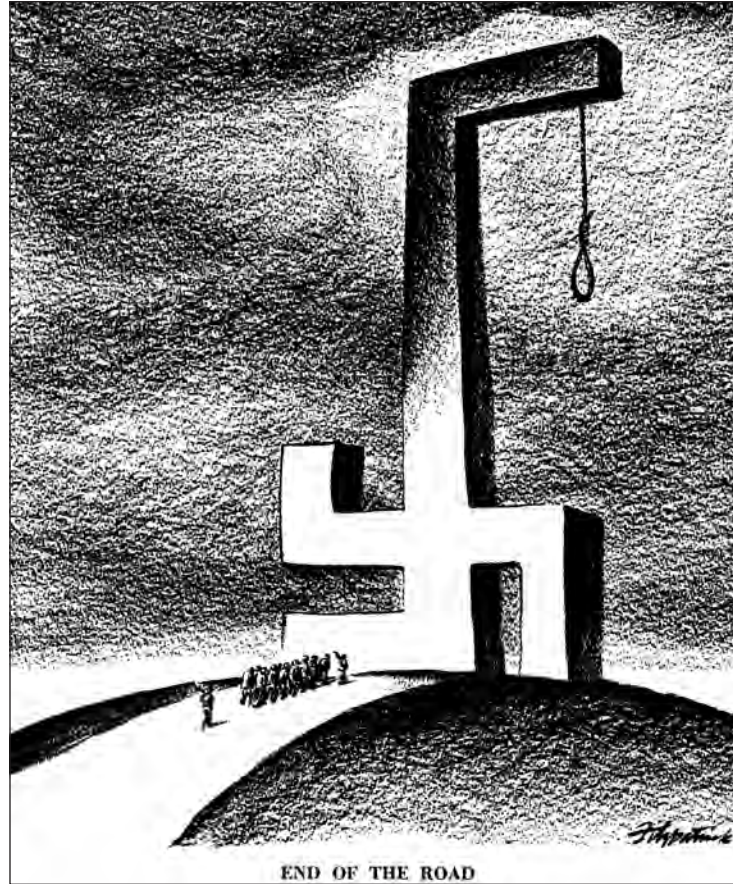
### ***Discussing the Illustration***

1. This photo was taken in 1945, just after the U.S. had taken control of a part of Germany. The photo shows a German girl who is upset as she looks at the bodies of 800 slave laborers killed at one point by SS guards in Namerding, Germany. What was the SS, and what role did it play in the Holocaust?
2. The U.S. soldiers shown here forced this girl, along with other townspeople in Namerding, to view these bodies. Why do you think they did this? Do you agree that it was right to force German citizens to see these bodies? Why or why not?
3. Many Germans claimed that they did not really know what was happening in the concentration camps. Do you think this was always true, sometimes true, or hardly ever true? Why?
4. Suppose a German citizen really did not know what was happening in the camps? Would that citizen then have had no responsibility for the Holocaust at all? Explain your answer.

### ***Follow-up Activities***

1. Was it right to blame the Holocaust on ordinary German citizens like the woman in the above photo? After 1933, the Nazis ended freedom in Germany. And they completely controlled its press. Moreover, Hitler tried hard to keep the Holocaust secret. So how could ordinary Germans know about it? On the other hand, the camps were really a huge industry. Thousands in the SS knew of them. Trains carrying Jews to the camps constantly rumbled through the night. Jewish slave laborers worked in many parts of Germany. What do you think ordinary Germans knew about all this? How much guilt did they share for it? And what, if anything, should the Allied nations controlling Germany in 1945 have done about this? Pretend you are a top military official on the scene when the above photo was taken. Write a report to send back to your superior officers and to the U.S. President. In the report, recommend a program to “de-Nazify” Germany. Justify any punishments that you think various groups of Germans deserve.

## Illustration 2



Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

### Discussing the Illustration

1. This editorial cartoon is about the Nazis. Its caption reads “The End of the Road.” What elements in the cartoon show that it is about the Nazis?
2. The cartoon is also about the Nuremberg Trials that were held shortly after World War II ended. What took place at those trials, and what elements in the cartoon show that it is about those trials?
3. In the Nuremberg Trials, an international court tried 22 top Nazi leaders for “crimes against humanity.” Twelve were sentenced to death. Do you think it was right for the victors in the war to hold trials of this sort for the losers in that war? Why or why not? In your view, what other situations, if any, would make it acceptable to hold war crimes trials of this sort?
4. Some people say this cartoon’s main point is that Nazism contained the seeds of its own destruction. What do you think they mean, and why do they find this idea in the cartoon? If this is the cartoon’s point, do you agree with it? Why or why not?

### Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: At the Nuremberg Trials, top Nazi leaders were tried by the Allied governments for crimes against humanity. The leaders of these Allied governments knew about the Holocaust during World War II. Reports of the genocide reached U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt early in 1943, if not sooner. Should he and the other Allied leaders have done more to stop the Holocaust? Could they have done more? To learn about this issue, read *Auschwitz and the Allies*, by Martin Gilbert (London, 1981) or read the chapter “Why Wasn’t Auschwitz Bombed” in *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, by Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum, eds. (Bloomington, IN, 1994) Pretend it is late in 1943. You are a committee to advise President Roosevelt on the Holocaust. In your group, discuss what you have learned from reading the sources listed here. Then write a brief report to the President with your recommendations. Defend the report in a discussion with the class.



## Illustration 3



The National Archives

### Discussing the Illustration

1. It is hard to find anything hopeful in the story of the Holocaust. It is a story of humanity at its worst. But perhaps this photo offers something positive. It shows three Jewish girls just released from Buchenwald in 1945. The flag they are carrying is a flag of the new Jewish homeland they are going to live in. What was that homeland, and in what part of the world is it located?
2. In 1945, Israel was still a part of Palestine. In what year did Israel become an independent nation?
3. The girl on the left in this photo is from Poland. The boy in the center is from Latvia. The girl on the right is from Hungary. What thoughts do you suppose these three had as they traveled on their way to Palestine?
4. Why do you think many Jews left for Palestine after World War II and fought so hard to help it become an independent nation? Do you think a photo like this does offer some hope in spite of the terrible events of the Holocaust? Explain your answer?

### Follow-up Activities

1. A myth about the Holocaust is the idea that Jews did not fight the Nazis, but just accepted their fate. In fact, many Jews did resist the Nazis. Read *They Fought Back* by Yuri Suhl (Crown, 1987). Choose several accounts from this book and summarize them in a brief talk to the rest of your class.
2. A historian named Yehuda Bauer has said that the Holocaust demands of all of us that we follow these three “commandments”:

*Thou shalt not be a victim.*

*Thou shalt not be a perpetrator.*

*Above all, thou shalt not be a bystander.*

What do you think about these commandments? Of the twelve illustrations in this booklet, choose three that you think best illustrate these three ideas. Write an essay about what Bauer meant by these three commandments, what they mean to you, and why you chose the three illustrations you did to help explain them.



# Answers to Factual Questions

(Answers provided only to questions  
requiring a single correct answer)

## Lesson 1

**Illustration 1** Question 1: Adolf Hitler, Germany.  
Question 2: Nazi Party  
Question 3: 1933

**Illustration 2** Question 2: They are burning books.

**Illustration 3** (no fact questions)

## Lesson 2

**Illustration 1** Question 1: The Jewish people  
Question 2: A stereotype is a simplistic and often insulting view  
or idea about a group of people.

**Illustration 2** Question 1: A huge octopus  
Question 3: In Europe in the past, Jews were excluded from  
many occupations and forced to become traders  
and money lenders, or bankers.  
Question 4: The Bolsheviks were communists, who were sworn  
enemies of capitalists such as bankers.

**Illustration 3** Question 1: Jews

## Lesson 3

**Illustration 1** Question 1: The “storm troopers” (*Sturmabteilung*, or SA) were  
young Nazi men who acted as a kind of private Nazi  
army in the 1920s and 1930s.  
Question 4: Taking over Jewish businesses; limiting the jobs  
Jews could hold; making Jews wear a Star of David  
in public; arresting, attacking and killing Jews, etc.

**Illustration 2** Question 1: The “Final Solution” was the plan to eliminate all of  
Europe’s Jews, and if possible all Jews in the world.  
Question 2: World War II ended in 1945.  
Question 4: The “death camps” were the ones set up in order to  
speed up the killing using gas chambers, etc.

**Illustration 3** Question 1: They were Jews killed in the camp.

## Lesson 4

**Illustration 1** Question 1: The SS (or *Schutzstaffel*) was Hitler’s black-shirted  
elite private corp. It became the Nazi state police  
corp, and it ran the concentration camp system.

**Illustration 2** Question 1: In the Nuremberg Trials, top Nazi officials and others  
were tried for crimes against humanity. Several were  
sentenced to death.

**Illustration 3** Question 1: Palestine, or Israel  
Question 2: 1948

