

Lesson 3 NAZI GERMANY

Part 2. Reflect and Respond

Either in class or as homework, have students reflect and respond to one or more of the topics below or have them develop a topic that has meaning for them based on the material covered in the lesson.

- In 1821, Heinrich Heine wrote, “Where one burns books, one will, in the end, burn people.” Consider what Heine meant by this statement. In your opinion, what is the danger of burning books? How, if at all, does burning books jeopardize human life? [**Note:** Heinrich Heine was a noted German author who converted to Christianity from Judaism in the nineteenth century. According to the Nuremberg Laws, Heine would have been considered a Jew; therefore, his books were also burned and forbidden.]
- Write a journal entry from the point of view of a fictional person living in Nazi Germany during the years 1933–1939. In addition to telling things like your name, age, town, and occupation, give your thoughts about what is happening to the Jews in Germany at the time.
- Desecrating or destroying places of worship is an all-too common form of violence in both historical and contemporary times—in the United States, the bombing of Atlanta’s oldest synagogue in the late 1950s, burning down African-American churches across the South in the mid-1990s, and vandalizing mosques in the Midwest following 9/11—are but a few examples. Why do you think places of worship are so often the targets of hate?

Part 3. Reflect and Respond

Either in class or as homework, have students reflect and respond to one or more of the topics below or have them develop a topic that has meaning for them based on the material covered in the lesson.

- Ellen Brandt shares in her testimony that as a response to what was happening in her life during the 1930s, she became both politically active and intensely religious. Write about a time or event in your life that you feel has helped to shape your identity or influenced how you view yourself.
- Some historians point out that the majority of Germans were indifferent to the plight of Jews. Their attitude was not rooted in hatred, but rather in complete apathy. Why might it have been that so many people simply didn’t care what happened to their former colleagues, neighbors, and, in some cases, friends? Do you see examples of apathy in your school, community, country? Why do you think people become apathetic toward problems that others may be facing?
- Write about a time when you spoke out against a rule or policy that you believed to be unfair. What was the situation? What caused you to act? How did others view your actions? How did the situation end? How did you feel about what you had done?