



LESSON PLAN: Anti-Jewish Policy in 1930s Germany

1 Begin this lesson by introducing students to **Julia Lentini (bio)**, **Herman Cohn (bio)**, and **Margaret Lambert (bio)**. After showing their clips of testimony, have a discussion using the following questions:

- Julia Lentini describes wanting to join the Hitler Youth along with her friends. What made the Hitler Youth attractive to her? What are some possible reasons why her parents wouldn't let her join?
- What are some of the specific ways that Herman Cohn says his life changed after the Nuremberg Laws were adopted? Herman says that things were much harder for children than for their parents. Why did he feel this way—what specific examples does he share to support his assertion?
- How does Margaret Lambert say things changed in Germany after 1933? How did her personal relationships change? What kinds of things was she forced to give up?

2 Provide each student with a copy of the activity **What Rights Are Most Important to Me?** Have students take a few minutes to rank the choices in order of importance from 1 (most important) to 9 (least important).

3 Divide the class into small groups and have students share how they ranked the rights on the handout and the rationale behind their decisions. [Optional: Have groups come to consensus on how the choices should be ranked. If it is not possible for group members to come to consensus, have them analyze why consensus is not possible.]

4 Distribute the **Nazi Germany and Anti-Jewish Policy** handout. Explain to students that this is a timeline of official Nazi actions against the Jews in Germany¹ beginning in 1933 when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party gained control of Germany. After students have reviewed the timeline of anti-Jewish policy, discuss the following questions:

- What is the purpose of laws?
- Looking at the chronological list of laws and decrees included on the handout, why could this be called a “build up of anti-Jewish policies”?
- What spheres of life do the laws and decrees affect? Into what groups could you divide them? Which belong to which sphere?
- Where does the idea of race appear in the decrees and laws?

¹ During the Weimar Republic, there were German Jews, whereas after 1933 there were Jews and there were Germans. They had a different quality of life and were viewed as two separate groups.

- How do you think a Jewish person might react to all of these restrictions and laws?
- How do you think a German might react to these policies?
- What would you imagine the overall atmosphere in Germany to be during this time?
- What other laws, if any, do you know about that have dehumanized people? (e.g., Jim Crow Laws; apartheid in South Africa)

5 After introducing students to **Esther Clifford (bio)**, show her clip of testimony and then discuss the following questions:

- After listening to Esther Clifford’s testimony, what picture do you begin to create in your mind about her experiences during the *Kristallnacht Pogrom*? What does she say she saw and felt?
- What does Esther say in her testimony that supports that the *Kristallnacht Pogrom* was a government-sponsored terrorist action against the Jews of Germany and Austria?
- Do you think that the *Kristallnacht Pogrom* reflected a turning point for Jews in Germany? On what have you based your response?

6 Show students **Frankfurt Am Main Germany, The Horowitz Synagogue, Kristallnacht, November 1938**. Ask them to describe what they see in the photograph. Follow by asking students to consider the following:

- What questions come to mind as you look at this photograph?
- What are the people in this photograph doing? What are they not doing?
- In your opinion, did the people in this photograph have a role and responsibility for this event? Explain your answer.
- What would you title this photograph and why?
- What is someone called who stands by and watches something happen without offering assistance? (i.e., bystander)
- Would you identify most of the people in this photograph as “bystanders”? Explain your answer.

7 Provide students with background information on the concentration camps established beginning in the 1930s by having them read the **Concentration Camps** handout. Ask students to consider the following questions:

- Who do you think the concentration camps influenced and how?

² Additional testimony, photographs, and other primary source documents about the *Kristallnacht Pogrom* can be found in the Studying the Holocaust unit.

- How do you think the use of concentrations camps may have furthered the Nazis' goals for German Society before the war?



Conclude this lesson by having students summarize how Germany had changed for Jews and for Germans in the six-year period from 1933 to 1939.

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME: 60-90 MINUTES