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The World War II Holocaust

Guide for Curriculum Unit 80.06.01
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The task of this unit is to impart knowledge about the Holocaust and to make the students aware of the dangers of prejudice. This unit deals with the subject of the genocide of the European Jewry during World War II. It relates briefly the history of the Holocaust; how prejudice and scapegoating created a climate of opinion against the Jews in Germany under Hitler's rule. It describes the gradual intensification of the Nazi persecution of Jews that eventually resulted in the genocide of the Jewish population throughout Europe. It also relates how other nationalities were also destroyed in the Holocaust. It describes the types of personal and group experiences the Jews endured in the German-occupied countries of Europe. The role of the Jewish councils in the ghettos is examined. The description of life in the ghetto is given. A typical day in a labor camp is described so that the students will get an idea what the conditions were like. The sufferings of the inmates are also depicted. The Jewish resistance movements are pointed out to show Jewish heroism in face of insurmountable odds. The unit also discusses the question of guilt pertaining to the Nazi leadership and the lower echelon that carried out the orders for the Final Solution of the Jewish problem. It also shows why different strata of the German society were implicated in the persecution and destruction of the Jews and how they benefited from such policies. The unit concludes with the necessity for stressing the practice of tolerance and respect for others.

(Recommended for Middle School World History, 11th grade U.S. History II, or a Middle or High School unit on Prejudice.)

Key Words

World War II American History Holocaust Jews Prejudice Anti-Jewish Wars

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