

The Holocaust

The Holocaust was the mass murder of millions of innocent people. It happened in the years leading up to and during the Second World War.

Number of Victims

It is impossible to know exactly how many people were killed during the Holocaust because the information was not written down by the **Nazis**. It is estimated that up to 17 million people lost their lives.

Affected Groups

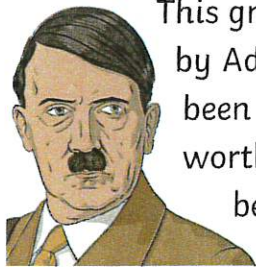
Most victims of the Holocaust were killed because they belonged to particular racial or religious groups. This means that they came from a certain place or held a certain set of beliefs. The Nazis wanted these people removed from Europe.

The largest group of victims of the Holocaust were Jewish people. The Nazis also killed people for many other reasons, including people of colour, people with disabilities or people they thought were criminals. Anyone who disagreed with Hitler and The Nazi Party would also be killed, including teachers.



The Nazi Party

In 1918, Germany lost the First World War and German people were facing hard times. Many people in Germany believed that it was the government's fault that they did not have money to buy food. They began to look for a new government party that would change this.



This group became The Nazi Party, which was formed in 1919. It was led by Adolf Hitler. The Nazi Party believed that the people of Germany had been born to rule over 'inferior races' – people the Nazis thought were worth less than them. Hitler spoke about Jewish people in this way. He began to spread the message that Jewish people were responsible for the problems Germany faced.

Anti-Semitic Rules

Hitler and The Nazi Party began creating **anti-Semitic** rules for Jewish people. Jewish people were not allowed to go to lots of public places in Germany. They were also made to wear yellow badges or white armbands with the Star of David sewn onto them.

During this time, Germany's armed forces had begun to invade other countries. They had started to kill a lot of people, including millions of Jewish people. When German soldiers invaded Poland in 1939, the Second World War began.



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Concentration Camps

By 1942, The Nazi Party had started to try to remove all Jewish people from Europe. They began to move people to places which had been set up to cause their death, known as concentration camps. Some people were killed straight away, whilst others were forced to live in horrible conditions. Prisoners kept at these camps were not given food or water even though they had to do hard jobs. They became so weak that they could barely move.

Prisoners were kept at these camps until the end of the Second World War in 1945. Any prisoners still in the camps were freed but it is believed that over 17 million people had already been killed.



Glossary

anti-Semitic: Something which specifically discriminates against Jewish people.

Nazis: A shortened name for the National Socialist German Workers' Party.