



THE HOLOCAUST

Power Point to accompany the consortium's lesson "Introduction to the Holocaust," located in the Database of Civic Resources

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The Basic Facts

Holocaust: the mass slaughter or reckless destruction of life; Holocaust most often refers to the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

- “The Holocaust” happened in Europe from 1933 to 1945. **That was only 63 years ago.**
- The **Nazis** were in power in Germany then and for 12 years, the Nazis and Adolf Hitler tried to get rid of people they hated.
- Millions of people were hurt and killed during the Holocaust. A lot of the people who were killed were **Jewish**, but many other people died also.
- How could this happen, that so many innocent people were killed by a government that did not believe in **equality** or **freedom**?

Prewar Jewish Life



Prewar Jewish Life



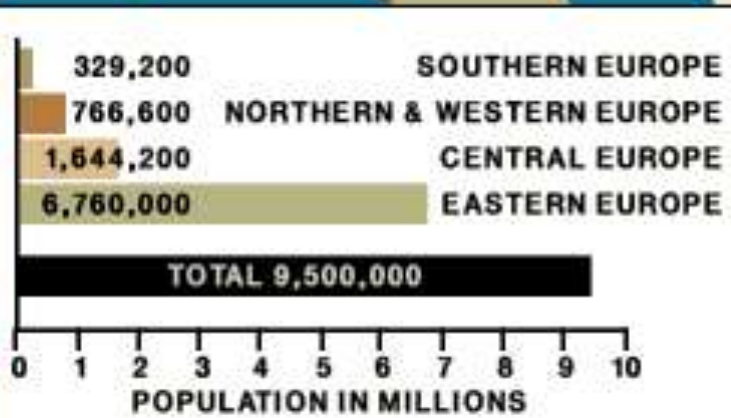
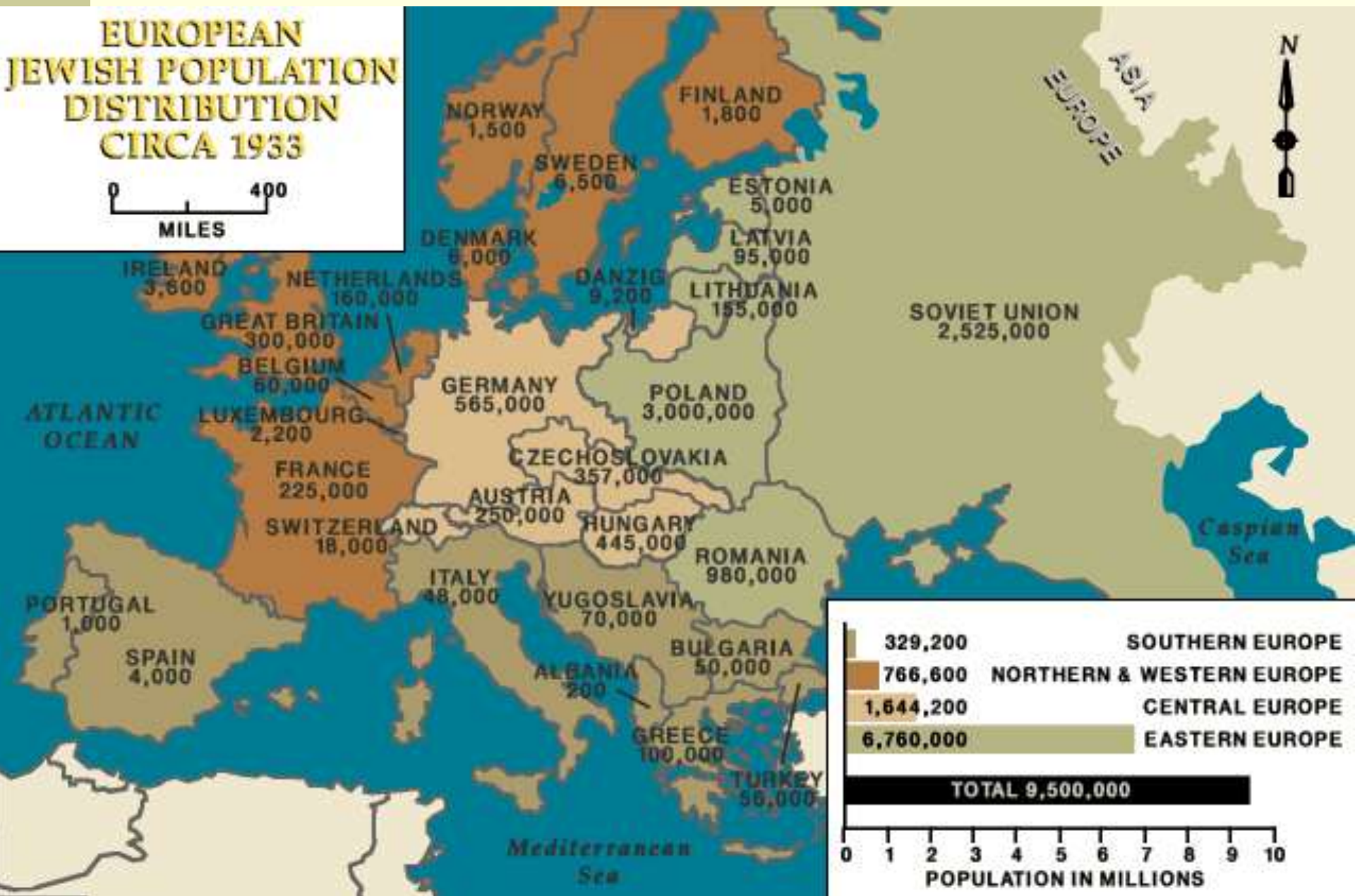
Prewar Jewish Life



Prewar Jewish Life



EUROPEAN JEWISH POPULATION DISTRIBUTION CIRCA 1933



From World War I to 1933: Shame and Hunger

Before 1933 and at the start of the Holocaust, Germany was **unstable** in a lot of different ways:

1. The German people were upset about losing World War I
2. They felt poor and jobs were hard to find
3. They hoped the government would solve their problems
4. And they were suspicious of people who they thought were different.

From World War I to 1933: Shame and Hunger

- When World War I ended in 1918, Germany was blamed for starting the war.
- The Versailles **peace treaty** that was signed after the war said the German government had to pay a lot of money for war damages.
- For a few years, Germany began to recover from the war. Banks in other countries, like the United States, loaned money to Germany to help. The German people pushed their anger aside.
- Then in 1929, **the Great Depression** began. After the **stock market crash** in 1929, businesses closed, and people lost their jobs. By 1932 in the United States, for every 100 people old enough to work, 25 of the people did not have a job. This means that there was a 25% **unemployment rate**.
- When the Great Depression began, the banks decided to “call in” their loans. To call in a loan means they wanted their money back—now! Many Germans got angry about the treaty again, because Germany’s **war debt** meant the government could not help its own people.

From World War I to 1933: Shame and Hunger

- In the early 1930s, even more people were out of work in Germany than in the United States!
- The German unemployment rate went as high as 42%. People were unable to pay their bills. It took a lot of money to buy food, so most families were hungry.
- In 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. He told the people that he would make them proud of Germany again, and give them a better life. Hitler made a lot of promises that sounded good — even simple ones like promising people bread and jobs.
- He also told people that Jewish people were the real problem.



A woman reads a **boycott sign** posted in the window of a Jewish-owned department store.

The sign reads:

“Germans defend yourselves against Jewish atrocity propaganda, buy only at German shops!”

From 1933 to 1938: The Nazis Come to Power

- Hitler and the Nazis declared a “**state of emergency**” and took away people’s **rights**.
 - Nazi police could read anyone’s mail, listen to their telephone calls, and search their homes.
 - People who spoke out against the Nazis were called **enemies of the state**. Some people were sent to **makeshift** prisons called **concentration camps**.
 - Books “enemies” wrote were burned.
 - Many people were hurt or killed.
- About one year later, President von Hindenburg died. Adolf Hitler decided he should be the only leader in Germany. He called himself the **Führer** (“the Leader.”)

Hitler and the Nazis



Adolf Hitler and the Nazis wanted to create a **master race**. They called the master race the **Aryans**.

To the Nazis, the “perfect Aryan” had blonde hair, blue eyes, and light skin. They were supposed to be tall and strong.

Look at a photograph of Adolf Hitler. Does he look like a perfect Aryan to you?

Hitler and the Nazis

- The Nazis thought some people were **inferior**, including:
 - Jews
 - Gypsies
 - Poles
 - African-Germans
 - Jehovah's Witnesses
 - Communists
 - People who were mentally or physically handicapped
 - Homosexuals
- The Nazis made laws forbidding them from getting married or having children.
- Many people tried to leave Germany, but could find no refuge (other countries were having hard times, too. Most countries, including the United States, were having trouble feeding their own people.)

What do you think this chart was used for?



Jewish people had their rights taken away

- Citizenship was revoked
- Kicked out of schools
- Doctors, lawyers, or people who owned businesses were forbidden to do their work.
- Park benches and the beaches had signs saying, “No Jews Allowed.”
- Jews even had to give away their pets!

Why would anyone join the Nazi party?

- For Nazis or people who helped them, life began to improve.
- They were given jobs, like painting signs that said, “No Jews Allowed.”
- The jobs that were taken away from **non- Aryans** had to be done.
- Lots of police were needed to enforce all of the new laws.
- People who helped the Nazis were allowed more food than people who disagreed with them.
- In a country that had been so poor after the first World War, many people were happy and excited to be Nazis.

Why would anyone join the Nazi party?

- Even the children were supposed to join the “Hitler Youth,” a club that taught them how to be Nazis.
- The Nazis paraded through towns with their flags. They made it seem exciting to be a Nazi.
- The radio stations and newspapers were controlled by the Nazis. They played Nazi songs. They told how wonderful Adolf Hitler and the Nazis were.



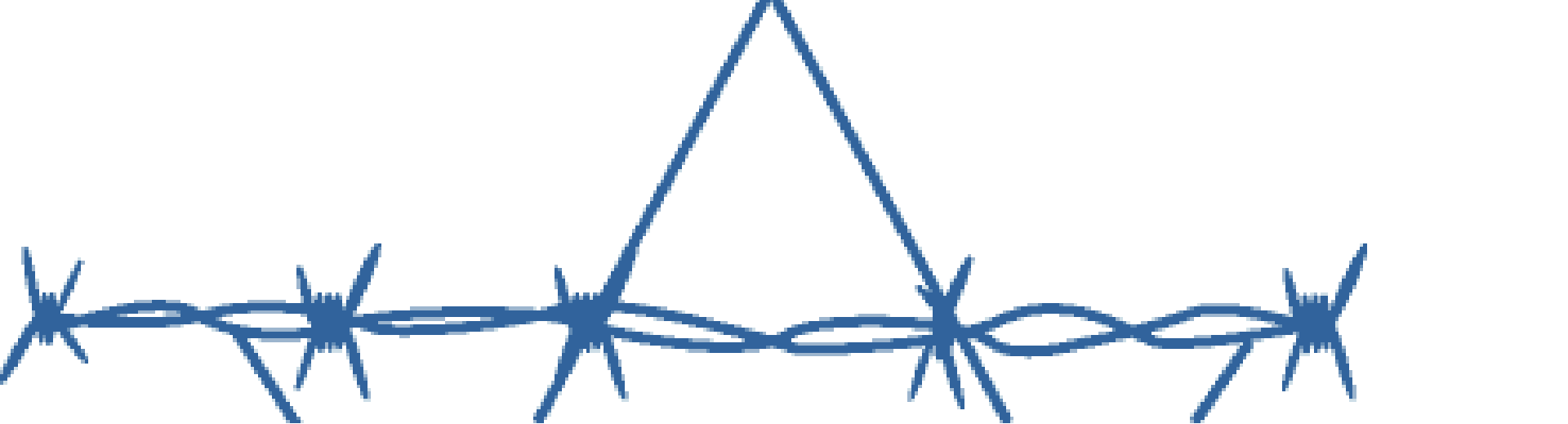
Why would anyone join the Nazi party?

- They **convinced** some Germans that people who were different were **sub-human**. This term meant that they were considered “less than human.”
- They used the **mass media**, like radios and newspapers, to hurt certain groups of people.
- The Nazis used a lot of **propaganda** to gain support from the German people.

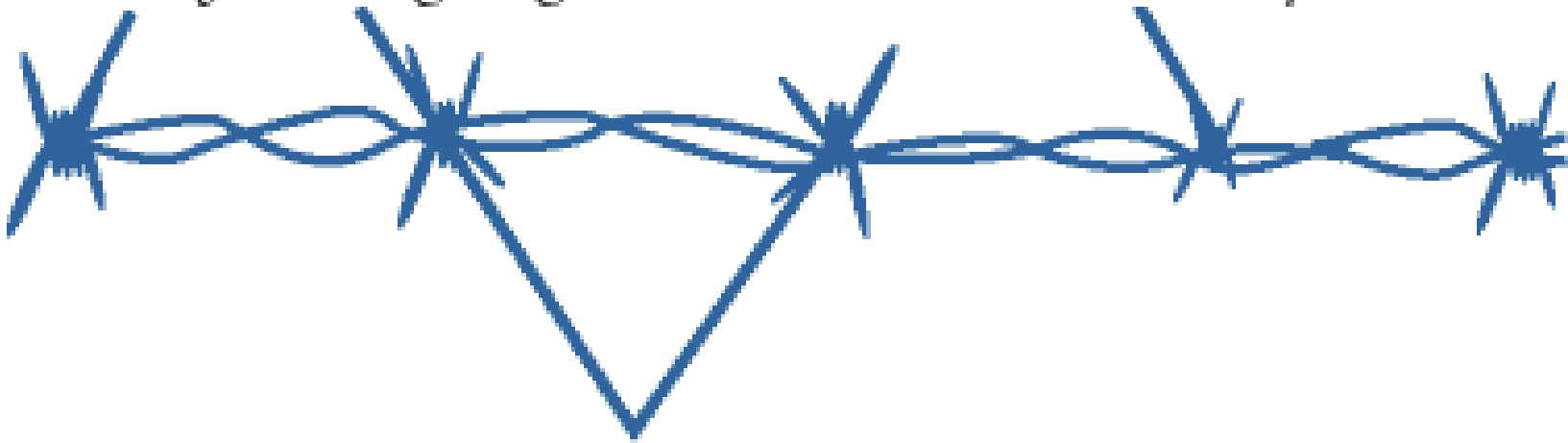
November, 1938: “Kristallnacht”

- In November 1938, things worsened as the Nazi government began to use violence against Jewish people, instead of just passing laws and saying bad things.
- For two days all over the country, they destroyed Jewish businesses, and burnt down the Jewish places of worship, called **synagogues**.
- Homes were broken into. People were beaten. About 30,000 people were arrested, and many were never seen again.
- Every Jewish person was in danger: children and old people, women and men, rich people and poor.
- These two days are now called **Kristallnacht**, or the “Night of Broken Glass.”

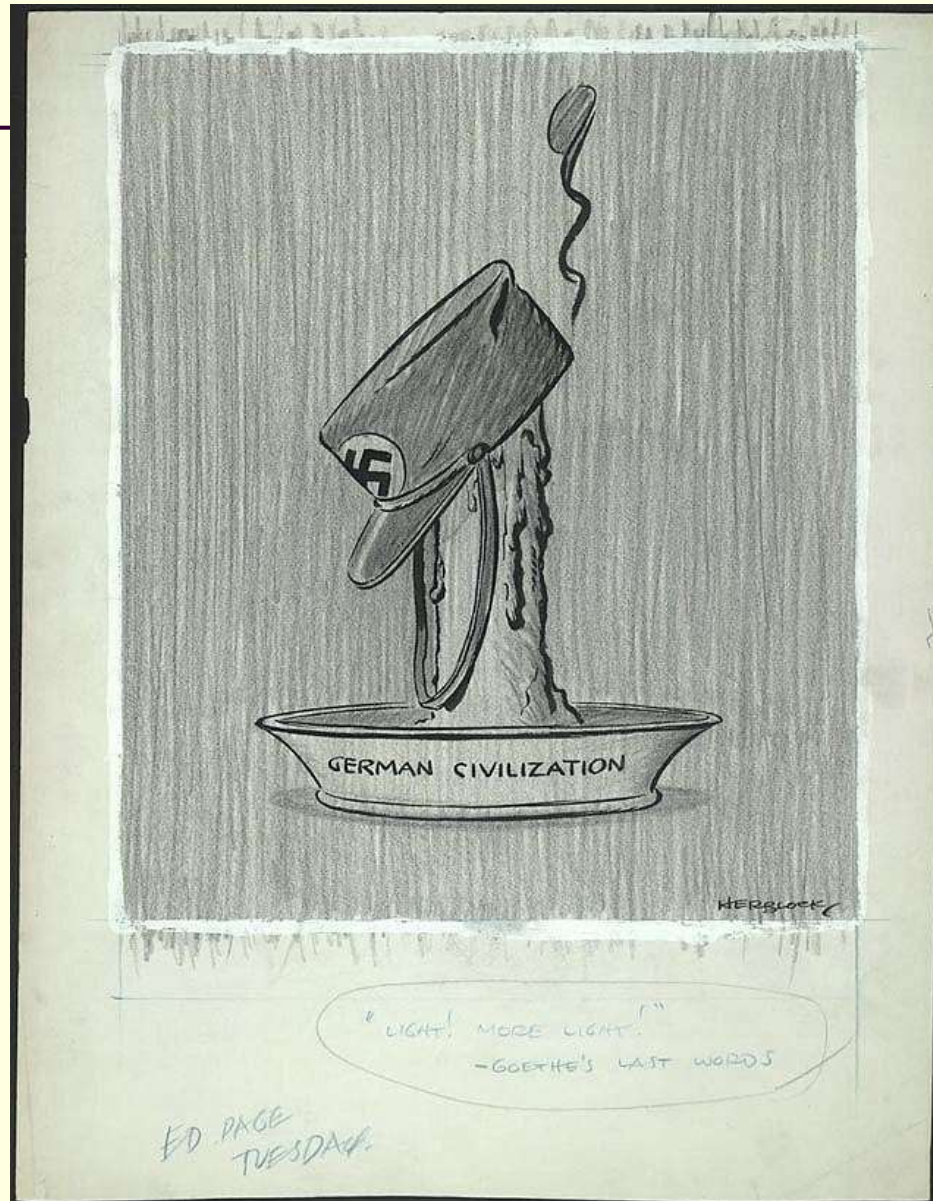




Imagine you are allowed only one bag for all of your possessions. A soldier holding a rifle orders you to quickly board a cattle car. The door locks and the train pulls out slowly. You have no idea where you are going or when the train will stop.



Day 2 Warm-Up



From 1939 to 1942:

World War II and the “Final Solution”

- Hitler and the Nazis wanted to control all of Europe, so in 1939, Germany **invaded** Poland, and World War II began. Germany took over Poland in just a few days.
- Soon Germany invaded many other countries. By 1941, they had over taken Poland, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway.
- As the Nazis took over more countries, they had even more Jewish people under their control. The Nazis made all Jews wear a **Star of David** on the outside of their clothing, so they were easy to find.
- They were forced to move out of their homes and into **ghettos**. The ghettos in Europe were dirty and crowded. Food was scarce, and many people were sick and dying.
- Often, when the ghettos were too full, the Nazis would send people to concentration camps or labor camps.

Jews from the Lodz **ghetto** board deportation trains for the Chelmno **death camp**.





Dutch prisoners wearing prison uniforms marked with a yellow star and the letter 'N', for Netherlands, stand attention during a roll call at the Buchenwald concentration camp.

From 1942 to 1944: The Death Camps

- In January 1942, fifteen Nazi officials met in **Wannsee**, a suburb of Berlin, Germany. They wanted to close the ghettos and get rid of the Jewish people.
- They came up with a plan called the “**Final Solution.**”
- For 9 years, the Nazis had killed many Jews, but the new plan was even more serious. They decided to kill *all* of the Jewish people in Europe—about 11 million people!

Death Camps / Concentration Camps

- The Nazis built killing centers called **death camps**. They wanted to keep their homeland “pure,” so most of the death camps were in Poland.
- The largest death camp was called **Auschwitz**.
- There were only six death camps but hundreds of concentration, labor and transit camps.



2. Auschwitz, Poland - Concentration camp opens April 1940
The message: "Work makes one free."

Deportation

- The death camps were like factories to kill people.
- First, people were sent to the camp in crowded, locked **boxcars** on very long trains with boxcars like the kind used for cows.
- Most of the people rode in the boxcars for days without food, a place to sit, or even a bathroom.
- They were hungry, dirty, and scared. They thought they were going to a labor camp to work.



Arriving at the Camps

- When the doors were opened, they were told to leave their suitcases behind. Men had to line up in one area, women in different area. Old people, sick people, and mothers with young children and babies were sent to another area. Why do you think this was done?
- People who **objected** were shot in front of everyone. The people felt confused and afraid.
- The Nazis told them that they would get food after they took a shower.



The Showers

The showers at the death camps had two uses.

1. One use was to bathe a lot of people at once.

People who could work as slaves for the Nazis were showered with ice cold water.

Then all of the hair on their bodies was shaved off. They were shaved for two reasons: to make them look different so it would be hard to escape, and to reduce problems with **lice**.

The new prisoners were given a number to use instead of their name. At some camps, the number was **tattooed** on their arm to mark them as prisoners forever.

2. The second use for the showers was to kill people.

Poison gas came out of the shower heads and killed people who could not work as slaves (especially the old people, sick people, and young children).

Millions of people died on the day they arrived at the death camp. Their families found out later that they were killed immediately.



Slaves in the camps

- The people who were chosen as slaves were shocked by what they were forced to live in **bunkers**, which were like barns.
- They slept on wooden platforms. Each platform held so many people that they had to roll over at the same time when they slept.





- In most camps, the only food was watered down soup, bread made with sawdust, and fake coffee.
- If the prisoners were worked hard and fed very little, the Nazis knew they would die quickly.
- Most of the camps were surrounded by electric, barbed wire fences and guard stations.
- Guards shot anyone who tried to escape. Each day, everyone in the camps was counted. If anyone was missing, the rest of the prisoners stood in lines for hours.

From 1944 to 1945: The Last Days

- In late 1944, the Allies were winning the war in Europe.
- The Nazis wanted to win their “war against the Jews,” even if they lost World War II. They tried to kill people faster.



Death Marches

- As the Allies came close to the concentration camps and death camps, the Nazis forced their prisoners to walk to camps in Germany. These are called the death marches.
- The winter was cold and snowy. Many people were too weak to walk and died on the side of the roads.

The War ends

- Finally, in the spring of 1945, the Allies won the war in Europe.
- It is difficult to **estimate** the number of people who died during the Holocaust. Think about a few of the ways people died:
 - in the ghettos they starved or were shot,
 - on the trains going to concentration camps,
 - in the gas chambers at the killing centers,
 - from too much work and too little food in the concentration and labor camps,
 - and on the death marches.
- **One common estimate of the Jewish population who died is six million people.**
- But saying “six million Jews” leaves out the other people who died, like Poles, gypsies, homosexuals, prisoners of war, and Jehovah’s Witnesses.
- We know the Nazis killed millions of people, but the exact number will never be known.

Sources for Power Point

- <http://www.cls.utk.edu/pdf/holocaust/sectionb.pdf>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holocaust>
- <http://www.ushmm.org/>