

CHC2P Unit 3: 1939-1959: War and Peace

Activity 7: The Holocaust

Overview

In this activity, you will explore the Holocaust: the tragic and sorrowful experiences of many Jewish people living in the European countries controlled by Adolph Hitler during World War II.

Lesson

Genocide



In the countries that Germany conquered, Jews were herded into designated city areas called ghettos. In 1941, the Nazi leadership decided on a “final solution” for the captured Jewish people and other “undesirables” such as Romas (gypsies) and homosexuals.

This “solution” was to exterminate the Jewish people in death camps such as Dachau, Auschwitz, and Treblinka. The planned killing of an entire race of people is called genocide.

Concentration Camps

The mass murder of 6 million Jewish people by the Nazis is known as the Holocaust. Most of the Jewish people were moved to the death camps by freight trains. In the camps, some inmates were selected to be used as slave labour. Others were stripped of all their belongings and then placed in “showers”, where they were murdered by poisonous gas. Later, their bodies were burned in large ovens.



The biggest death camp was Auschwitz, located in what is now Poland. It remains today as a reminder of the Holocaust and a reminder of the evil that human beings are capable of doing to others.

Another concentration camp was located at Terezin, about 100 kilometers north of Prague, Czechoslovakia. The Nazis renamed it Theresienstadt and sent 140,000 Jewish prisoners there, from 1941 to 1945.

Assignment

Write a 1-page summary, comparing and contrasting the treatment of the Japanese Canadians in Canada with the treatment of the Jewish people in Europe during the Second World War. Mention both similarities and differences in the treatment.