

# Studying The Holocaust: A Scope and Sequence

## Unit 1 – History of Antisemitism

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1. Ancient origins – Deicide, association with the devil, Jews as the anti-Christ that undermines society
2. Middle Ages - Blood Libel, Desecration of the host, Jewish badges, Usury
3. Early Modern - Conspiracy theories (*link to Jews as the anti-Christ that undermines society*)
4. Modern concepts of race

## Unit 2 – Diversity of Pre-War Jewish Life

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1. Secular and Religious
2. Urban and Rural
3. Assimilated and Traditional
4. Nationalist, Bundist, Socialist, Zionist, etc

## Unit 3 – 1919 The Aftermath of WWI

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1. German socio-political and economic response to the Treaty of Versailles
2. Collapse of Weimar Republic
3. Result of the Great Depression

## Unit 4 – 1933-1939 – Nazi Germany

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1. Nazi seizure of Power
2. Significance of historical Antisemitism and its use by the Nazi party
3. Structure of Nazi regime (dictatorial "Fuehrer-State" AND popular "People's State")
4. Nazi Propaganda and Indoctrination,
5. Historiographical debate: 'coercion' versus 'consensus'
6. Persecution of non-Jewish victim groups, especially T4 program
7. Policies of Racial Hygiene
8. The process of destruction
  - Defamation (anti-Jewish symbolic in public)
  - Discrimination (exclusion from society, anti-Jewish legislation)
  - Definition (Nuremberg Race Laws)
  - Pogrom of "Kristallnacht" (as a turning point and intensification of anti-Jewish violence)
  - Expropriation ('Aryanisation', robbing the Jews)
  - Expulsion (forced emigration)
9. Dachau - the beginning of the camp system
10. Marking of Jews – yellow stars to create separation and 'social death'

## Unit 5 – Ghetto Life

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1. Nazi invasion of Poland marked the beginning of WWII and the process of ghettoization of Polish Jews
2. Life and Death in the Ghettos – a general introduction to the establishment of ghettos and the living conditions found there
3. Choiceless Choices
  - The establishment of Jewish Councils, their structure and tasks
  - Case study – Jewish Council - Lodz ( Mordecai Rumkowski)
  - Case study – Jewish Council - Warsaw (Chaim Czerniakow)
  - Case study – Jewish Police
  - An exploration of the ethical problems of passing judgment on the past

## Unit 6 – Resistance

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1. Ghetto resistance, partisan warfare, hiding, camp resistance, spiritual and moral resistance
2. Non-Jewish resistance and Righteous Among the Nations

## Unit 7 – *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing squads)

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1. Invasion of the Soviet Union, place of *Einsatzgruppen* behind German army advance
2. The radicalization of Nazi policy by examining the open air shooting method of extermination
3. Genocide in the shadow of military strategy
4. Choices made by perpetrators
5. Case Study - Australian War Crimes Trials - Serniki: The Story of a Forester
6. Historiographical debates: eg Intentionalists versus Structuralists (Functionalists) (the debates surround the emergence and function of ghettos and research on the question of *Einsatzgruppen* – what factors allowed so many to become perpetrators and collaborators?)

## Unit 8 – Camps

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1. The Nazi camp system - a general introduction to the historical context in which the camps are established and their evolution over time
2. Differences between Work camp / Death Camp
3. Methods of deportation and transports
4. Everyday life and conditions in camps
5. Choiceless Choices
  - “Community” of prisoners – the hierarchy of inmates
  - “Kapos” – brutality and solidarity
  - “Jüdische Sonderkommandos” (Jewish Special units)
  - An exploration of the ethical problems of passing judgment on the past
6. Death marches
7. Historiographical debate on perpetrators: Browning-Goldhagen (ideological versus situational factors)

## Unit 9 – Non-Jewish Victims of Nazi Persecution

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1. Highlight various Nazi victim groups in order to reveal the similarities and differences with the Holocaust against the Jews. e.g. Roma, Sinti, disabled peoples, vagrants, political opponents, Jehovah Witnesses, social outcasts and homosexuals

## Unit 10 – Liberation

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1. Jewish liberation from concentration camps
2. Displaced Persons camps and migration patterns

## Unit 11 – Post-War Trials

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1. Post-war trials: Nuremberg, various German/Austrian trials, Eichmann, Australia (Serniki)

## Unit 12 – End of Course Reflections

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1. Characterise 'perpetrators', 'bystanders' and 'resistors' (including Righteous Among the Nations)
2. Understand the importance of teaching history
3. Understand the importance of using survivor testimony
4. Understand the importance of artefacts
5. Consider the complexities of the victims' “choiceless choice” and the ethical concerns of passing judgment on the past
6. Bystander issues today: reflect on other genocides and injustice in student's own communities
7. Active empathy: the importance of “rehearsing students for empathy” is understood by reviewing a case study of a Righteous Among The Nations who exemplifies this empathy in action