

Lesson Plan – Antisemitism

Introduction

Student age range: 14-16

Subject: History

Time required: 50 minutes

Overview:

The Holocaust was made possible, in part, by the long history of antisemitism in Germany and Europe, prior to WWII. The Nazi party gained popularity partly by appealing to existing anti-Jewish prejudices, and this was a necessary precursor to the violence which followed. It is important that students understand the link between historical antisemitism and the genocide that followed.

Students will use a range of source material to explore the origins and development of Antisemitism.

Essential questions:

- What is antisemitism?
- What are the origins of antisemitism?
- How and why have Jewish people been persecuted over time?

Learning objectives:

- Students will understand that antisemitism is a form of racism directed at Jews.
- Students will understand that there was a long history of antisemitism in Europe, and this created the conditions to enable genocide of Jews during the Holocaust.

Key issues/concepts:

- Continuity and change
- Cause and effect
- Significance

Materials:

[Presentation - Antisemitism](#)

[Teacher Notes - Antisemitism](#)

Teaching notes:

There is a risk, when teaching this material, that students will be unable to distinguish truth from propaganda. If the material is not handled carefully, students may mistakenly take propaganda at face value, and believe it. Therefore, teachers must be very clear that the propaganda about Jews was based on lies, and that all forms of racism, including antisemitism, are unacceptable. Students should learn to distinguish between facts, opinions and lies.

This subject matter provides an opportunity for students to explore the basis of their own beliefs.

Glossary:

- Antisemitism
- Medieval Europe
- Deicide
- Propaganda
- Blood libel
- Ideology
- Prejudice
- Stereotype

Lesson Instructions

STEP ONE – Presentation (45 minutes)

Work through the lesson using the [Presentation – Antisemitism](#). Follow the [Teacher Notes- Antisemitism](#), which provide instructions for each slide.

The presentation covers:

- Definition of Antisemitism. Students discuss and then record a definition.
- Origins of Antisemitism. Students have the option to explore one example of ancient antisemitism

- Medieval Antisemitism. Students analyse a medieval image of a Jew wearing a yellow disc badge, and holding garlic and a bag of money
- Exploring three flawed bases of antisemitism. The myth that Jews killed Jesus, the lie of the blood libel, the stereotype of Jews and money. Students develop a written response.
- Antisemitism in Interwar Germany. Students compare two sources, each with a different representation of Jewish contribution to the German war effort in WW1.
- To conclude, students complete a summative cloze paragraph.

FINISHING UP

Summative Assessment question: Discuss the concept of ‘cause and effect’ in relation to the development of antisemitism over time.

Modifications:

The option for extension is included in the presentation, in the section on the Origins of Antisemitism. It gives students directions to research instances of antisemitism in the ancient world.

Additional Resources

The Sydney Jewish Museum has developed a detailed resource for educators to understand the long history of antisemitism. It also provides resources for further research.

Click here: [Sydney Jewish Museum Antisemitism Resource](#)

Related lessons

After this lesson, we recommend you teach the rise of the Nazi Party, and then propaganda and laws from 1933 to 1939. [Click here](#) to access lesson plans for those topics.

You will also find a suggested plan for teaching a full unit about the Holocaust [at this link](#).