

# Lesson Plan – Kristallnacht

## Introduction

Student age range: 14-16

Subject: History

Time required: 50 minutes

## Overview:

Kristallnacht ('The Night of Broken Glass'), now known as the November Pogrom, was the night of 9-10 November 1938, when German Nazis violently attacked Jewish people and property across Germany and German-held territories. It was a turning point in the war against Jewish people; the point at which years of escalating antisemitism turned decisively towards violence.

Students will explore survivor testimony to understand the events of the night, its impact on Jews in Europe, and its place in the history of the Holocaust.

## Essential questions:

- What was Kristallnacht?
- Who organised Kristallnacht?
- What were the impacts of Kristallnacht?

## Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about the event known as 'Kristallnacht'.
- Students will understand how Kristallnacht acted as a turning point in the German war against Jews.

## Key issues/concepts:

- Continuity and change
- Perspectives
- Significance

## Materials:

[Presentation – Kristallnacht](#)

[Teacher Notes - Kristallnacht](#)

[Worksheet - Kristallnacht](#)

## Teaching notes:

Students should understand Kristallnacht as a turning point. This is when the early stages of the Holocaust, largely characterised legal persecution, gave way to a more violent stage of persecution. Kristallnacht was the precursor to ghettoisation, which is the next lesson in this series.

## Glossary:

- Pogrom
- Synagogue

## Lesson Instructions

All these activities are included in the **Presentation – Kristallnacht**. Use the **Teacher Notes – Kristallnacht** as you work through the presentation.

### ONE – What does Kristallnacht mean? (5 minutes)

*This activity is included in the **Presentation – Kristallnacht**.*

Students use the three photographs to decode the word ‘*kristallnacht*’.

Students write a definition of Kristallnacht in their notes.

### TWO – Direction from above? (10 minutes)

*This activity is included in the **Presentation - Kristallnacht**.*

Students read excerpts from a speech by Goebbels and a telegram from Heydrich to determine the extent to which the events of Kristallnacht were ordered by Nazi leadership.

### THREE – Eddie Jaku’s experience of Kristallnacht (25 minutes)

*This activity is included in the **Presentation – Kristallnacht** and on the **Worksheet – Kristallnacht**.*

Students watch two short videos of Holocaust Survivor Eddie Jaku talking about his experience of Kristallnacht. They then answer questions about the videos.

Ideally:

1. show the video

2. give students the questions
3. show the video for a second time
4. give students time to answer

## FOUR – A Historian’s Perspective (5 minutes)

*This activity is included in the **Presentation – Kristallnacht**.*

Students read a quote from Emeritus Professor Konrad Kwiet, and assess the impacts of Kristallnacht that are revealed in the quote.

## FINISHING UP

Students hold up a number of fingers to indicate how many perspectives on Kristallnacht they were exposed to today. Teacher chooses 2-3 students to explain their response.

## Modifications:

The two videos of Eddie Jaku can be shown to the whole class, and the questions worked through together.

Alternatively, the students can be given the **Worksheet - Kristallnacht**, which includes links to the videos, along with transcripts and questions.

As an extension task, students can explore the response to Kristallnacht from Indigenous Australians, led by William Cooper. This can be offered as an optional research task. It could also take the form of a paragraph response after reading Cooper’s petition, [here](#).

## Related lessons

After this lesson, we recommend you teach about Ghettos. You can find this, and other Holocaust lesson plans, at [this link](#).

[Click here](#) to see a suggested plan for teaching a full unit about the Holocaust.