

Worksheet – Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish People

<p>Many Jews could not return to their homes after the war, and moved to countries all over the world to make a new start. Approximately 31,000 came to Australia.</p>	<p>Jews were suffering physically from their time during the war. This included the effects of malnutrition, lack of sanitation and medicines, forced labour, hiding and medical experimentation.</p>	<p>Jewish culture had been destroyed, with synagogues ruined, leaders and artists murdered, and the near obliteration of Jewish writing, art, music and theatre from German-held lands.</p>
<p>Many Jews could not return to their pre-war homes because they were no longer citizens, were not welcome, faced violence, or had no home or family to return to. They were stateless – without a legal nationality.</p>	<p>After the war, Jews had to redefine their identity, from victims to survivors. They had to work the events of the Holocaust into their self-ideation, place it within a long Jewish history of suffering and survival.</p>	<p>The Holocaust imposed psychological and emotional trauma on the victims. They had seen and experienced terrible events, which did significant psychological damage.</p>
<p>Children and young people had their lives interrupted by the Holocaust. Many child survivors had never attended school, or had not attended for many years. They were educationally behind their peers of the same age.</p>	<p>The trauma of the Holocaust is intergenerational. Children and grandchildren of survivors suffer psychologically from their heritage.</p>	<p>The Holocaust destroyed entire Jewish communities, Whole towns and areas were ‘cleansed’ of Jews, and with them their culture and history was lost.</p>

<p>Very few Jewish families survived the Holocaust intact. Every family lost somebody, and a great many Jews were the only survivors from their families. Many young people found themselves entirely alone.</p>	<p>Many Jews who survived the Holocaust were unable to reclaim their homes or belongings. They had to begin life again with no financial assets or security.</p>	<p>Stateless Jews moved into Displaced Persons' (DP) Camps. They were liberated but not free. Some spent years in this limbo, waiting to be accepted by other countries so they could begin their lives again.</p>
<p>Jewish religious buildings and institutions were destroyed, and Jewish religious leaders were murdered during the Holocaust. Religious life had to be rebuilt from the ashes.</p>	<p>Jews, who had been the victims of a Nazi government that disowned them, and then sought their obliteration, had to learn how to live in organised society and to trust institutions and governments again.</p>	<p>The world recognised the need to establish a safe place for Jewish people. So the State of Israel was established in part of the ancient land of Israel.</p>
<p>Antisemitism did not immediately disappear with the end of WWII. Acts and attitudes of hatred against Jews persisted. In Kielce, Poland, for example, over 40 Jews were violently massacred in 1946.</p>	<p>As a response to the atrocities of the Holocaust, the United Nations established the International Declaration of Human Rights, and the world became more protective of the rights of every human being.</p>	<p>With the death of 6 million Jews, all their future potential was lost as well. Of the 1.5 million Jewish children killed, which might have been great inventors, poets, philosophers, medical scientists, teachers, parents...?</p>