

Extension: Connecting the Timeline Activity to *The Path to Nazi Genocide*

GRADE LEVEL: Adaptable for grades 7–12

SUBJECT: Multidisciplinary

TIME REQUIRED: Approximately 45 minutes per section of this lesson (4 sections total)

This is an extension that reviews key concepts and information for students.

This builds upon the Museum’s [Timeline Activity](#) and [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#) film.

RATIONALE

This extension highlights the changes in the social and political status of Jews in Germany between 1933 and 1945 and provides a foundational understanding of the events that led to the Holocaust. Students analyze and think critically about the impact of state-sponsored antisemitism and the intersections of World War II and the Holocaust using two foundational resources from the USHMM: the Timeline Activity and the film *The Path to Nazi Genocide*.

OVERVIEW

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How did conditions throughout Europe at the end of World War I contribute to the rise of Nazism in Germany?
- How did the German government under Nazi rule build support among the German people?
- How did the German government and citizens between 1933 and 1939 define, segregate, and impoverish Jews? How did non-Jewish Germans respond to these laws?
- How did the Nazis lead Germany to war in Europe and, with their collaborators, kill millions—including systematically murdering six million Jewish people?

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

At the end of this lesson, students understand:

- How the Nazis appealed to diverse sections of German society to gain social and political support.
- That Nazi ideology targeted Jews as the priority “enemy.”
- That Nazi persecution of Jews and others was systematic in nature, eventually leading to the Holocaust.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#) (38:00)
- [Worksheet](#) for *The Path to Nazi Genocide*
- Cards from the [Timeline Activity](#) and [analysis sheet](#)
- Optional Teacher Reading: *Holocaust Encyclopedia* article: “[Introduction to the Holocaust](#)”
- If you are new to teaching about the Holocaust, review the USHMM’s [Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust](#) or watch a [teacher training video](#)

Extension: Connecting the Timeline Activity to *The Path to Nazi Genocide*

LEARNER VARIABILITY MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The lesson is intentionally flexible to allow for individual teacher modifications to achieve educational outcomes. Technology and teaching strategies are suggested in the instructional sequence; please use other options if they support the learning needs of your students. Consider utilizing graphic organizers, note-taking strategies, reading choices, and online engagement tools.

Educators may choose to use learner variability modifications specific to this lesson:

- Teachers can provide students with choices as to how they access information throughout lessons, i.e. read print alone, read print with a partner, read along while the teacher reads aloud, etc.
- Define terms that would clarify understanding for students.
- *The Path to Nazi Genocide* is subtitled in 12 languages. Scroll below the video to see the options.
- Reference the [Glossary](#) in the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* for definitional support.
- This lesson can be taught either starting with [The Path to Nazi Genocide](#) or the [Timeline Activity](#).

PART 1: WATCH PATH TO NAZI GENOCIDE CHAPTER 1

1. Ask students the following question as a pre-assessment before viewing *The Path to Nazi Genocide*. What do you know about life after World War I and the effect of the war throughout the world?
2. [Watch The Path to Nazi Genocide Chapter 1](#) (13:18)
 - a. Discuss as a class: How did conditions in Germany and Europe at the end of World War I contribute to the rise of Nazism in Germany? Students will answer questions either individually or using a think-pair-share strategy related to the video chapter on the [worksheet](#).

PART 2: WATCH PATH TO NAZI GENOCIDE CHAPTER 2

3. Review with students learnings from Chapter 1: answer the following question before they watch Chapter 2:
 - a. How did World War I impact Germany and the German people? Students may also answer questions related to the video chapter on the [worksheet](#).
4. [Watch The Path to Nazi Genocide Chapter 2](#) (6:55)
5. [Timeline Cards: Laws and Decrees](#)
 - a. Students work in pairs or groups. Teachers distribute the [Historical Event cards](#) from 1933-1936 (cards 3-7) and choose a selection of the [Laws and Decrees](#) cards from 1933-1936 (cards 3-16) for students to read, analyze, identify, and answer the questions using the [worksheet](#).
 - b. Note: Card numbers refer to the slide number in PDF.

- When finished, discuss with the entire class:
 - How did the German government under Nazi rule build support among the German people?

Extension: Connecting the Timeline Activity to *The Path to Nazi Genocide*

PART 3: WATCH PATH TO NAZI GENOCIDE CHAPTER 3

6. Students answer the following question before watching Chapter 3:
 - a. How can laws affect how people think about others in the community?
7. [Watch *The Path to Nazi Genocide* Chapter 3](#) (7:28)
 - a. Students may also answer questions related to the video chapter on the [worksheet](#).
8. [Timeline Cards: Laws and Decrees](#)
 - a. Students will work in pairs or groups. Teachers choose a selection of the Laws and Decrees cards from 1933-1939 (cards 3-19) for students to read, analyze, identify, and answer the questions using the [worksheet](#):

- When finished, discuss with the entire class:
 - Based on the laws and decrees, how did the German government and citizens between 1933 and 1939 define, segregate, and impoverish Jews? How did non-Jewish Germans respond to these laws?

PART 4: WATCH PATH TO NAZI GENOCIDE CHAPTER 4

9. Students answer the following questions before watching Chapter 4:
 - a. How did the Nazis lead Germany to war in Europe? Why might collaborators choose to aid Germany in killing millions-including systematically murdering six million people?
10. [Watch *The Path to Nazi Genocide* Chapter 4](#) (13:54)
 - a. Acknowledge for students that the content in Chapter 4 may be difficult. Ask students to reflect on the film after viewing it and allow space for discussion of emotional reactions and challenges of studying this difficult history. While it is important to understand what happened and think about why it happened, it can be hard to watch and grapple with the reality and the magnitude of the suffering. **Teacher note:** In some classes, you may choose to omit the section with graphic film footage of a killing operation (minutes 4:43 to 5:40).
 - b. Students may wish to take notes if needed. Students may also answer questions related to the video chapter on the [worksheet](#).
11. [Timeline Cards: Laws and Decrees](#), [Historical Events](#), and [Individual Profile Cards](#)
 - a. Students will work in pairs or groups. Distribute the Laws and Decrees cards from 1939-1945 (cards 19-22), Historical Events Cards from 1939-1945 (cards 14-44), and Individual Profile Cards for students to read, analyze, identify, and answer the questions using the [worksheet](#):
 - i. **Teacher note:** Consider the length of the profile cards and the difficulty of the vocabulary when assigning profile cards to students. Students could read cards individually, in pairs, or small groups. Students could also read multiple cards. Not all profile cards need to be distributed to students.

Extension: Connecting the Timeline Activity to *The Path to Nazi Genocide*

ASK THE STUDENTS

- Based on the laws and decrees, historical events, and individual profiles, what have you learned about how the Nazis led Germany to war in Europe and, with their collaborators, killed millions—including systematically murdering six million Jewish people?

CONCLUSION

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- Share the USHMM definition of the Holocaust. *The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims--six million were murdered; Roma, people with disabilities, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic or national reasons. Millions more, including gay men, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.* After sharing and discussing the definition with students, have them describe in writing how *The Path to Nazi Genocide* film illustrated different elements of the definition.
- Based on evidence from the film, timeline cards and the definition of the Holocaust, ask students to write one question and provide the answer on how or why the Holocaust happened (students can answer in their notebook, on a separate sheet of notebook paper, or on their KWL chart). Share with the class. What questions do they still have? Do their classmates have answers to those questions?
- Based on the timeline cards, students create hexagonal cards of the Historical Events and complete a hexagonal connection activity. This can be done using paper or online engagement tools. Also, students can use other Timeline Cards in this activity if they relate.