How were minorities and Jews persecuted in Nazi Germany?



What do you think you know about the Holocaust?

Make a quick list

Help box



When did the Holocaust happen?

- Where did the Holocaust happen? (Answers could include countries or specific sites)
- Who was persecuted and murdered during the Holocaust?
- Who was responsible for the Holocaust?
 (Answers could include groups or individuals)
- What else do I know about the Holocaust?





Why do we study the Holocaust?



https://www.het.org.uk/footballersremember



https://www.het.org.uk

What do we mean by the term 'Holocaust'?

The word 'Holocaust' comes from ancient Greek: 'holos' means 'completely' and 'kaustos' means 'burnt'. The word was first used to describe religious sacrifices. For this reason, some people have objected to the term 'Holocaust' and prefer to use the Hebrew word 'Shoah', which means 'catastrophe'.

The term 'Holocaust' means different things to different people. However there are several key themes that run through any definition of the word. Below are three definitions of what the Holocaust was. Each has been written by an institution which helps to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust.





"Under the cover of the Second World War, for the sake of their 'New Order', the Nazis sought to destroy all the Jews of Europe. For the first time in history, industrial methods were used for the mass extermination of a whole people. Six million were murdered, including 1,500,000 children. This event is called the Holocaust.

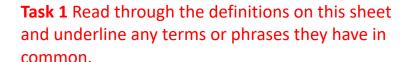
The Nazis enslaved and murdered millions of others as well. Gypsies, people with physical and mental disabilities, Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, trade unionists, political opponents, prisoners of conscience, homosexuals, and others were killed in vast numbers."

Imperial War Museum, London, UK

"The Holocaust was the murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators. Between the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941 and the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, Nazi Germany and its accomplices strove to murder every Jew under their domination. Because Nazi discrimination against the Jews began with Hitler's accession to power in January 1933, many historians consider this the start of the Holocaust era. The Jews were not the only victims of Hitler's regime, but they were the only group that the Nazis sought to destroy entirely."



Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Israel



Task 2 Using the terms and phrases you have underlined, write your own definition of the term 'Holocaust'.

Task 3 Why might people object to the term 'Holocaust'?

Task 4 Why might people prefer the term 'Shoah'?

Task 5 Why is it important that we properly understand terms such as 'Holocaust'?



"The Holocaust refers to a specific genocidal event in twentieth-century history: the statesponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims – 6 million were murdered; Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny."





Key definitions critical to this study

| Key term | Definition |
|------------------------|--|
| Holocaust | Completely burnt |
| Shoah | Catastrophe |
| Mass- extermination | The act of murdering a number of people, typically simultaneously or over a relatively short period of time |
| Genocide | The deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group. |
| Oppression | prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority. |
| Discrimination | the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. |
| Pogrom | an organized massacre of a particular ethnic group, in particular that of Jews in Russia or eastern Europe. |
| Anti-Semitism | hostility to or prejudice against Jews. |
| Propaganda | Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view. |

