

What do we already know about WWII?

World War II: 1939-1945

A VERY simplified version

- National Socialist German Workers' Party was a political party in Germany from 1919-1945 (the term "NAZI" comes from '**N**ational**s**ocialist');
- Adolf Hitler was the leader of the "NAZI" party in Germany from 1921-1945;
- Hitler was appointed chancellor on January 30, 1933.



World War II: 1939-1945

A VERY simplified version

- Hitler gradually asserted more power in Germany and created for himself a **dictatorship**;



- Part of Hitler's beliefs was a focus on "racial purity". Hitler believed that there was a "pure race" and that the economic problems in Germany at the time were in large part due to Jewish people.

World War II: 1939-1945

A VERY simplified version

- Hitler gradually implemented laws in Germany against Jewish people: Jews could not shop in certain areas, could not own businesses, have radios, and had to wear yellow stars at all times in public;

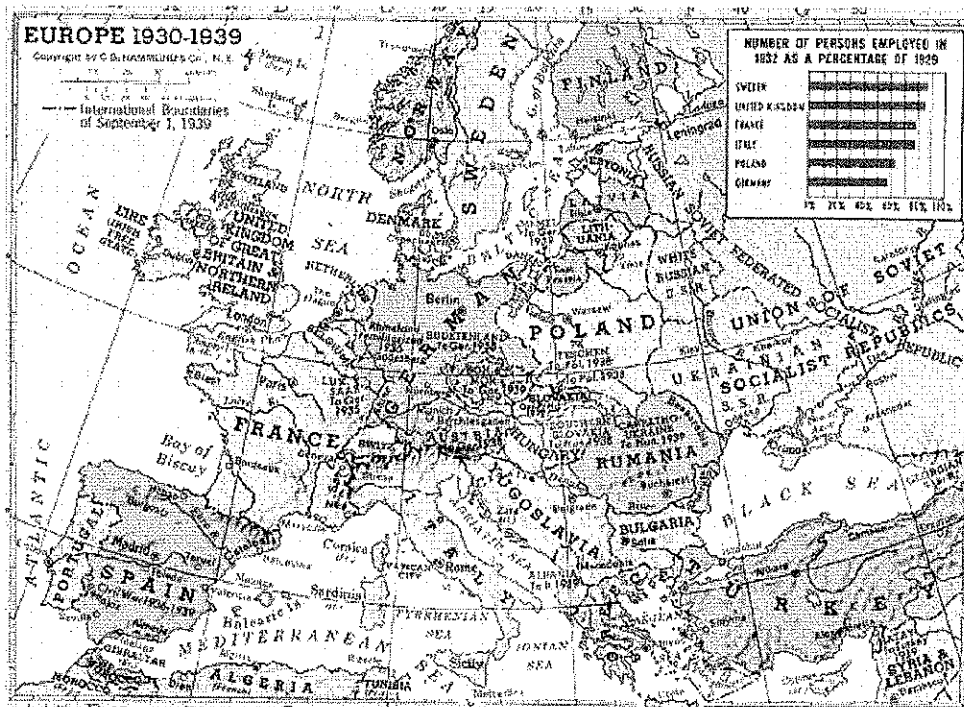


- Many Jews fled Germany during the 1930s.

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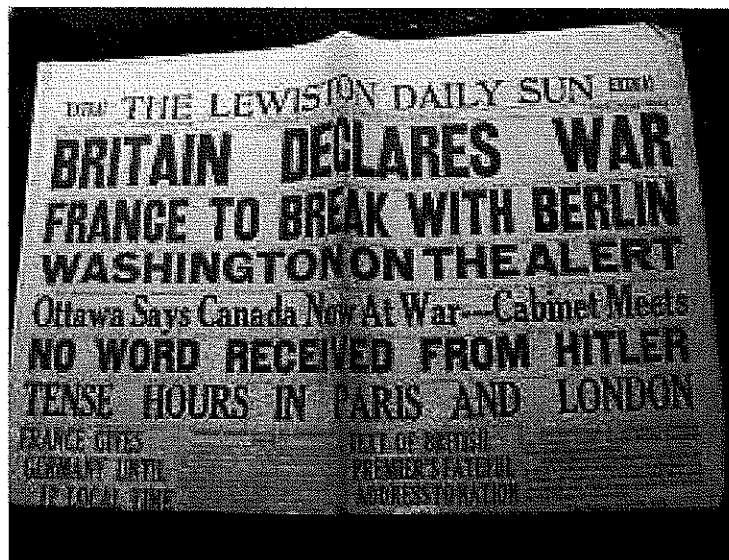
- Many countries tried to deal with Hitler diplomatically in light of his policies. Yet on September 1, 1939 Germany invaded western Poland.



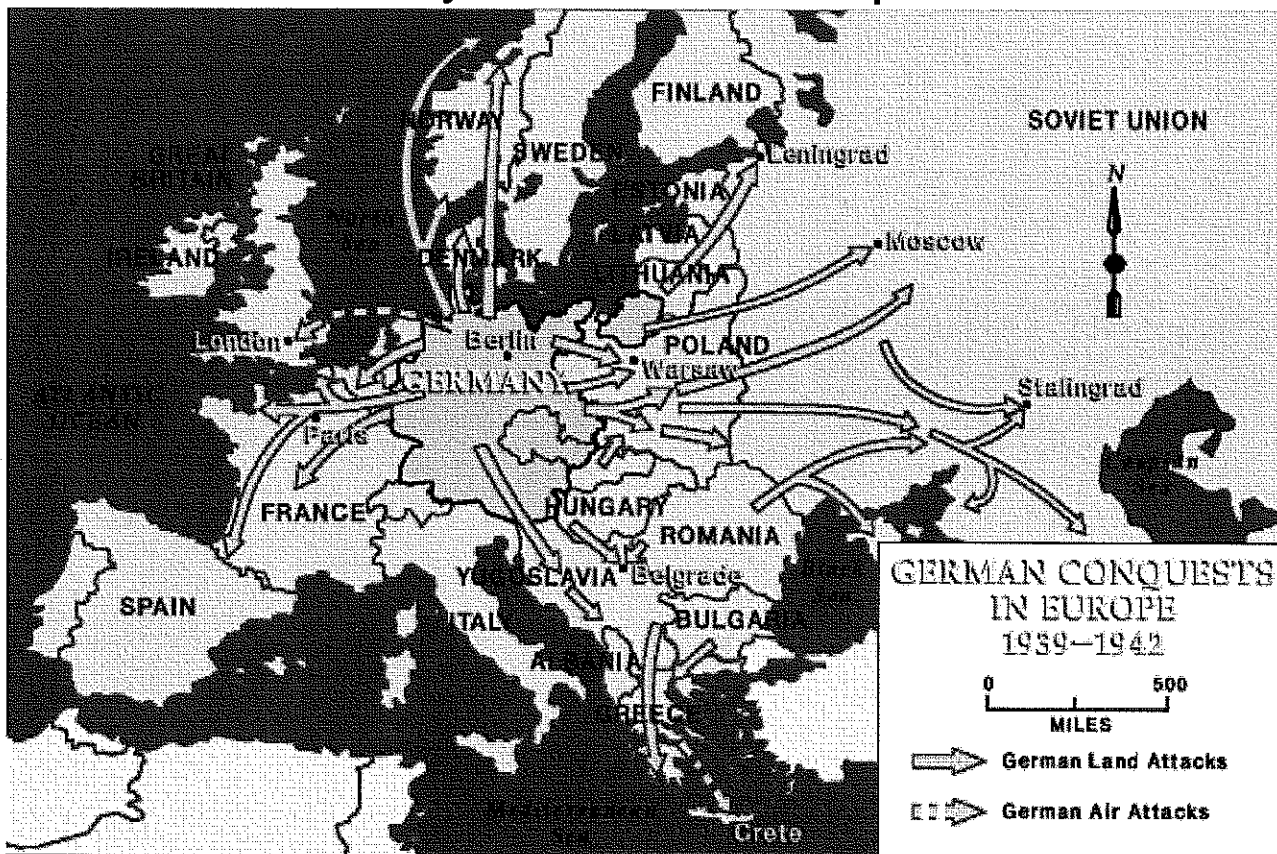
World War II: 1939-1945

A VERY simplified version

- Britain (and thus Canada) declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939.



Over the next three years, the Nazi party use the military to control Europe...

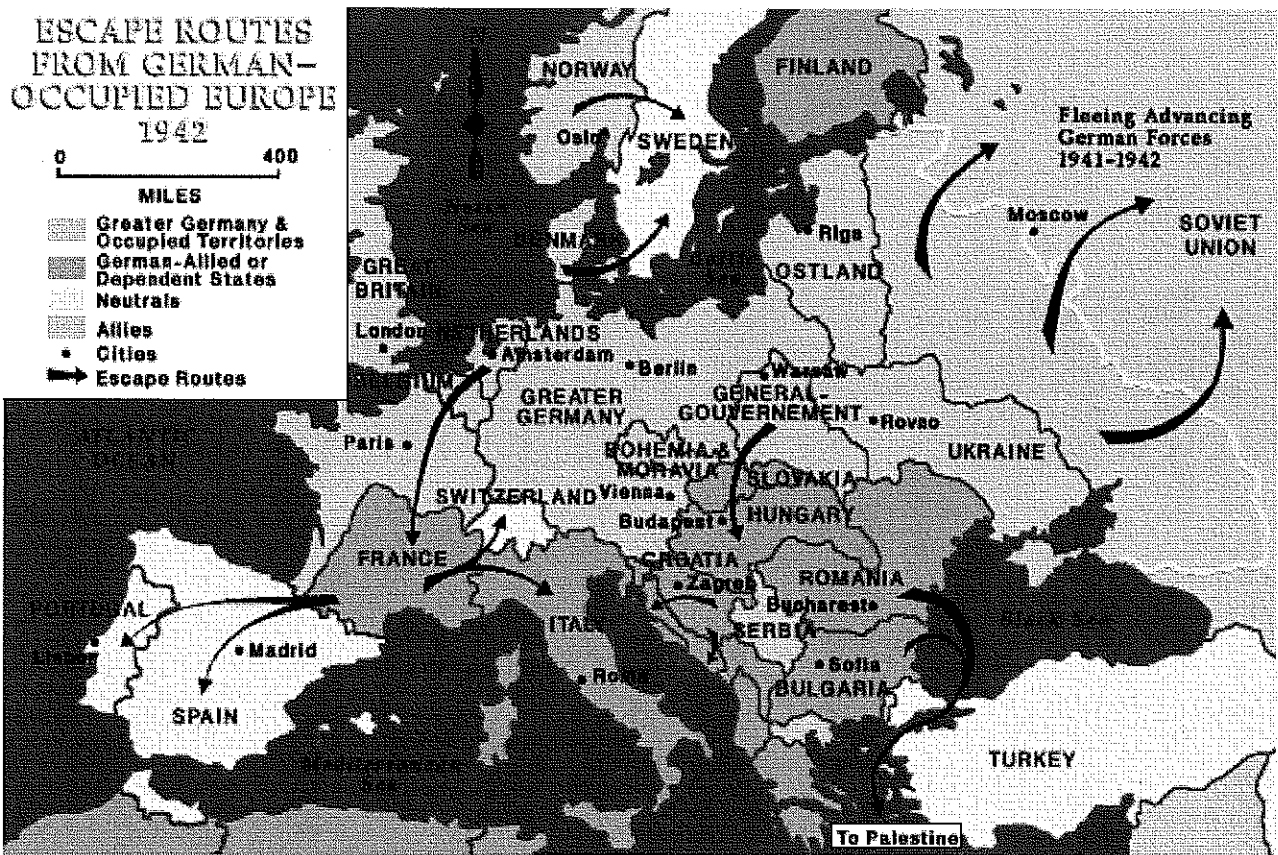


Routes taken by Jewish people and others to flee occupation...

ESCAPE ROUTES FROM GERMAN-OCCUPIED EUROPE 1942

0 400
MILES

- Greater Germany & Occupied Territories
- German-Allied or Dependent States
- Neutrals
- Allies
- Cities
- Escape Routes



The Holocaust

1933

NAZIS boycott Jewish businesses;

They issue decree that defines non-Aryans;

GESTAPO - secret police - created;

First work concentration camps are built Dachau;



The Holocaust

1934

Jews are not allowed to have national health insurance

the SS (Schutzstaffel) is formed

Hitler becomes Der Fuhrer

1937

Jews are not allowed to teach Germans

Jews not allowed to be accountants or dentists



The Holocaust

1938

Nazi troops enter Austria

Jews are not allowed to practice medicine

1939 November 9, 1939

Kristallnacht - "Night of Broken Glass"

Jewish stores, shops and synagogues
burned
down



The Holocaust

1939

Nazis speed up emigration of Jews

Jews must hand over all
gold and silver.

Nazi troops seize
Czechoslovakia



The Holocaust

Sept 1 1939

Nazis invade Poland

Begin transporting German-Jews to Poland

Sept 3, 1939

Britain declares war.



The Holocaust

On Jan 20, 1942
the Nazi Party enacted the
“final solution” to the Jewish
“problem”:

Nazis would attempt to
exterminate the entire Jewish population of
Europe, an estimated 11 million persons, through
executions, gas vans, and finally work and
extermination camps.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Holocaust

When World War I ended in 1919, the Treaty of Versailles stripped Germany of its pride and economic stability. This was a time of high unemployment and economic chaos in Germany, conditions that were ripe for Adolph Hitler and his National Socialist German Worker's Party—the Nazi Party—to rise to power.

Using the Jews as a scapegoat, Hitler roused the German people with a viciously anti-Semitic program and a plan to build a superior German “master race.” From the time he became the absolute dictator of Germany, Hitler carried out a methodical persecution of the Jewish people. His “final solution to the Jewish question” was extermination in death camps, also known as concentration camps. This sad time in history is referred to as the Holocaust. During the period that Hitler was in power (1933–1945), six million of Europe's nine million Jews were murdered by the Nazis.

Terrorism against Jews was carried out by the SS, ruthless police units of the Nazi Party. Jews were forced to wear the Star of David so they could be easily identified. Special units began mass shootings that claimed about two million lives, but these were too slow to suit the Nazis. After putting up with horrible conditions in ghettos, such as the Kraków ghetto in Poland, Jews were finally crowded into freight cars and transported to concentration camps. One of the most notorious of these was Auschwitz, which was both a death and labor camp, with a small percentage of the people kept alive as slave labor. At Auschwitz, 2,000 people at a time could be killed in the large gas chambers, and almost 5,000 bodies could be burned in the oven in one day.

On June 6, 1944, Allied forces landed in Normandy, France, in the D-day invasion. Slowly the concentration camps were liberated. The Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz on January 27, 1945. By that time, an estimated two million persons, including one and a half million Jews, had been murdered there.

British English

The author of this novel, John Boyne, is from Ireland. As a result, he uses British spelling for some words. There are some spelling differences between American and British English. The following chart shows some major differences.

	-or vs. -our	-er vs. -re	-i vs. -y	-ic vs. -is	-a vs. -y
American	favor	center	tire	practice	pajamas
British	favour	centre	tyre	practise	pyjamas

The following are some British words that you will read in the book and their American equivalents:

British Word	American Equivalent
greengrocer	produce market
courgette	zucchini
jumper	sweater

PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this book is about? Will it be serious or humorous? When and where do you think it takes place?
2. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to find out more about the Holocaust. Then brainstorm with a small group of classmates to fill in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. When you finish the book, return to the chart and complete the third column.

The Holocaust

What I Know -K-	What I Want to Learn -W-	What I Learned -L-

3. **Social Studies Connection:** On a map of Europe and a globe, locate Germany and the city of Berlin, Poland and the city of Krakow, Denmark, and Switzerland, all places that are referred to in the book.
4. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* relates to the Nazis treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust. Make a list of books and movies that portray this tragic time in history. What purpose do these books and movies serve? Do you think it is important to continue to remember the Holocaust?
5. Have you read any other books about the Holocaust set in Europe during World War II? If so, when and where did these stories take place? What did you learn about life at the time?
6. How would you characterize the Nazis who carried out the persecution and murder of the Jews? Can you imagine that these same people might have been loving and kind to their families and friends? How might this make their crimes seem even more horrible?
7. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Work with a small cooperative learning group to discuss the meaning of the word *prejudice*. What does the word mean to you? What causes it? How can it be prevented or overcome?

Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)

8. Although the story is fiction, it is based on historical facts. The characters in such a work of historical fiction may be fictional or historical or both. Discuss with your classmates other works of historical fiction they have read or seen in films and what periods of history they covered. What do you enjoy about this type of book? What challenges do you think an author faces when writing a work of historical fiction?
9. **Social Studies Connection:** As you read, create a time line from the year of Bruno's birth, 1934, through the end of the novel, 1945. Fill in important historical events relating to Hitler's Germany. Use events mentioned in the novel as well as significant events you find in an encyclopedia or history book.
10. Look at the title page at the beginning of the book and you will notice that the author calls this book a fable. A fable is one of the oldest literary forms. It is usually a short tale that teaches a moral, or lesson. The main characters, sometimes animals, are characterized quickly with a few broad strokes. One character usually displays a flaw that leads to a downfall. The conclusion leads directly to the moral. A fable is universal, cross-cultural, and ultimately, highlights what makes us human. As you read the novel, use this chart to provide examples of how it fits this genre.

Characteristics of a Fable	Examples from <i>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</i>
Teaches a moral	
Main characters are broadly drawn	
One character displays a flaw that leads to a downfall	
Highlights what makes us human	

What does the word *prejudice* mean?

What causes it?

How can it be overcome?

Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)

11. In the Anticipation Guide that follows, write *T* in the “Before Reading” column if the statement is true in your opinion. Write *F* if you feel the statement is false. After completing the book, mark your answers again in the “After Reading” column to see if your opinion has changed.

Statements	Before Reading	After Reading
1. It is difficult to adjust to living in a new place.		
2. When you see someone being mistreated, you should always try to help.		
3. Sometimes it is better not to know if something horrible is going on around you.		
4. It is difficult for children to see the faults of their parents.		
5. A person can be kind to some people and cruel to others.		
6. Betrayal of a friend is unforgivable.		
7. People are more alike than they are different.		
8. It is possible to judge someone even before you get to know that person as an individual.		

Lesson 3 Nazi Germany

STUDENT HANDOUT - What Rights Are Most Important to Me?

Directions: Rank the following in order of importance to you, with #1 being most important and #9 being least important.

- _____ Date/Marry whomever you choose?
- _____ Go to a public school close to home?
- _____ Live in a neighborhood of your choice?
- _____ Swim and play in a public swimming pool or park?
- _____ Eat what you want, according to taste, culture, and religious custom?
- _____ Be able to own a pet?
- _____ Leave your house whenever you choose?
- _____ Shop at stores and businesses of your choosing?
- _____ Vote?

Consider the following...

During the time of the Holocaust hundreds of thousands of Jews were rounded up on a moment's notice and sent to concentration camps. To avoid this, many families went into hiding to protect themselves from this injustice.

If you were forced to go into hiding (in the present day) what items would you take with you? Remember: you can only have a small bag (school backpack size) with you...