

Read Me First: Welcome to the Holocaust Homeschool Curriculum

Dear Educator, Parent, or Co-op Leader,
Thank you for taking the first step toward bringing **accurate, compassionate, and significant Holocaust education** into your learning community. This sample lesson pack represents a small but powerful glimpse into the **full Holocaust Homeschool Curriculum**, a program designed to equip students in **grades 6–12** with the historical knowledge and moral grounding they need to understand one of the most pivotal and tragic events in human history.

Why This Curriculum Matters

The Holocaust is not just a topic to be studied — it is a profound lesson in humanity, courage, and the consequences of hatred left unchecked. Too often, students encounter this subject in ways that are either **too graphic and overwhelming** or **oversimplified and disconnected from the real human stories**.

Our curriculum was built to **change that**.

Developed with a **trauma-informed approach** and aligned to **state and national history standards**, this program carefully balances **historical accuracy** with **age-appropriate scaffolding**. It is designed to **inspire empathy, critical thinking, and reflection**, ensuring that students not only *learn* about the Holocaust but also *understand* its ongoing relevance in today's world.

What You'll Find in This Sample Pack

This sample pack is your opportunity to experience the quality, structure, and depth of our program firsthand. It includes materials from **Chapter 1**, which introduces students to the foundations of Holocaust history and lays the groundwork for deeper exploration.

Inside, you'll find:

1. **Complete Chapter 1**

A full, ready-to-teach lesson with engaging narratives, **QR codes** linking to interactive survivor testimonies, videos, and digital resources.

Purpose: Bring history to life with authentic voices and multimedia content.

2. **Reflective Questions**

Carefully designed questions that prompt students to **think critically**, make personal connections, and engage in respectful discussion.

Purpose: Build empathy and encourage higher-order thinking.

3. **Lesson Plans**

A **step-by-step teaching guide** with clear objectives, pacing suggestions, and instructional tips for homeschool parents, co-op leaders, and teachers.

Purpose: Save you planning time and give you confidence as an instructor.

4. **Study Guide**

Student-friendly resources for review, note-taking, and comprehension checks.

Purpose: Reinforce learning and prepare students for assessments.

5. **Timeline**

A visual, chronological overview of key Holocaust events to help students see the **bigger picture**.

Purpose: Provide context and clarity for historical understanding.

6. **Glossary of Terms**

Clear definitions of essential vocabulary and concepts introduced in the chapter.

Purpose: Support students' academic growth and disciplinary literacy.

A Preview of the Complete Curriculum

The full **Holocaust Homeschool Curriculum** includes **18 comprehensive chapters** and **4 special appendices**, covering topics such as:

- Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust
- The rise of antisemitism and Nazi ideology
- Ghettos, camps, and resistance movements
- Stories of survivors, liberators, and bystanders
- The aftermath, justice at Nuremberg, and lessons for today

Each chapter comes with **QR codes**, survivor testimony videos, maps, primary sources, and engaging projects to ensure that learning is **interactive and meaningful**.

This curriculum is **ideal for grades 6–12** and adaptable for **homeschool families, co-ops, private schools, and districts**.

Our Promise to You

Teaching the Holocaust can feel daunting. Many educators wonder,

"Am I prepared to do this topic justice?"

We created this program so you **don't have to do it alone**. With clear guidance, age-appropriate materials, and rich multimedia resources, you can teach with **confidence, compassion, and scholarly rigor**.

Our goal is simple:

To honor the memory of those who lived through the Holocaust by ensuring their stories are never forgotten — and to equip today's students to stand against hatred and injustice.

Next Steps

If you find value in this sample pack, we invite you to explore the full curriculum and become part of a growing community of educators and families dedicated to preserving history and building a brighter future.

- **Individual License:** For single-family use.
- **Co-op License:** For up to 20 households.
- **District License:** For schools and multi-site programs.

Visit holocausthomeschoolguide.com to view purchasing options and educator support resources.

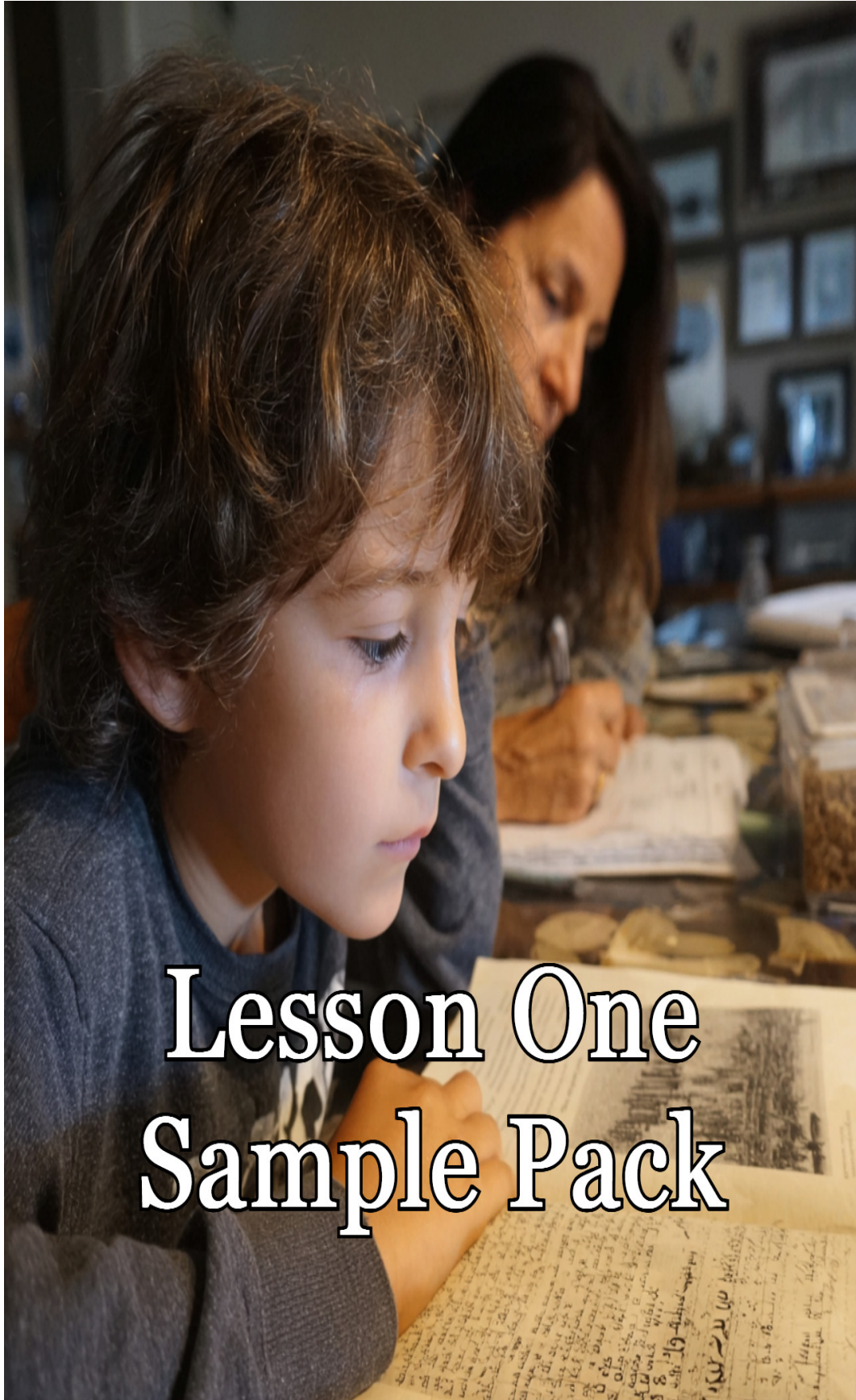
Final Note

This is more than a curriculum — it's a **movement to ensure that "Never Again" truly means *never again*.**

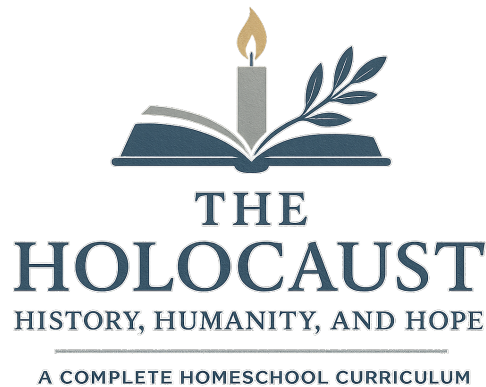
Thank you for previewing our work. Together, we can bring history to life and empower the next generation to create a more compassionate world.

With gratitude,

The Holocaust Homeschool Curriculum Team



Lesson One Sample Pack



Holocaust Homeschool Curriculum

Sample Lesson – Chapter 1: Europe Before World War I

Lesson Title: Europe Before World War I – Setting the Stage

Grade Level: 6–12

Duration: 1 week (2–3 sessions)

Chapter Reference: Chapter 1, *Humanity's Darkest Hours* (pp. 53–65)

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify the political, social, and economic conditions in Europe before World War I.
2. Analyze how alliances, nationalism, and imperialism created tensions leading to war.
3. Explain how these factors set the stage for anti-Semitic movements and the rise of extremism in the early 20th century.
4. Create a **timeline** of major pre-WWI events using provided resources.

Common Core Standards Alignment:

- **RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
 - **RH.9-10.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source.
 - **RH.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information in diverse formats.
 - **WHST.6-8.9:** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
-

Materials Needed

- PDF of *Humanity's Darkest Hours*, Chapter 1

- Audio version of Chapter 1 (provided by the curriculum)
 - Printed **Timeline Worksheet**
 - Internet access for QR code videos and interactive map
 - Student notebook or journal
 - Optional: Faith-based reflection guide for families
-

Lesson Activities

Session 1 – Building Context

Time: 30–45 minutes

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Play the **Chapter 1 Audio Introduction**.
- Discuss as a group:

“What do you already know about Europe before World War I?”

2. Reading (15 minutes)

- Students read Chapter 1 (pp. 53–65).
- Encourage them to highlight key events, countries, and leaders.

3. Interactive QR Code Video (10 minutes)

- Scan QR Code: *Europe 1914 Animated Map*.
 - Watch together and note which countries were allies and which were rivals.
-

Session 2 – Critical Thinking and Analysis

Time: 45–60 minutes

1. Class Discussion (15 minutes)

Guiding questions:

- How did imperialism and nationalism create conflict?
- Why were alliances both a source of security and danger?
- How did these tensions set the stage for discrimination and anti-Semitism?

2. Timeline Activity (20 minutes)

- Students place major events on a blank timeline:
 - Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand
 - Creation of the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente
 - Rise of nationalism in Germany and Austria-Hungary
- Compare timelines as a group.

3. Checkpoint Assignment (10 minutes)

- Write a **one-paragraph reflection**:

“Which factor do you think was the most important in leading to World War I, and why?”

Optional Faith-Based Reflection

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Read Psalm 34:14: “*Seek peace and pursue it.*”

- Discuss how peacekeeping could have changed the course of history.
-

Assessment

- Completed timeline worksheet
 - Reflection paragraph (graded with provided rubric)
 - Class participation
-

Extension Opportunities

- **Primary Source Analysis:**
Examine WWI-era political cartoons to analyze symbolism and bias.
 - **Family Discussion Prompt:**
“Why is it important to study the events leading up to the Holocaust?”
-

Free Resources Included in Sample

- Printable **Timeline Worksheet**
 - QR Code for **Europe 1914 Animated Map Video**
 - Audio introduction for Chapter 1
 - Teacher checklist with pacing suggestions
-

Closing Reflection

“History is not just about the past — it teaches us how choices, actions, and beliefs shape the future. Understanding the causes of global conflict helps us prevent them in our world today.”



CHAPTER 1

PART 1 EVENTS

PART 2 IMPACT

Chapter 1

Europe Before World War I

"On the very eve of the birth of the Third Reich, a feverish tension gripped Berlin." - William L. Shirer



Figure 1 Image represents the old world of monarchy, represented by kings, queens, emperors, and czars, and the burgeoning new ideas of democracy, nationalism, and socialism that were gaining momentum among the masses.

The Stage is Set: Kings, Queens, and New Ideas



Figure 2 Tsar Nicholas II and Kaiser Wilhelm II

Let's set the stage: Europe was a patchwork quilt of different countries, some big and some small. There were kings and queens, emperors and czars. But guess what? New ideas were sweeping the land, like democracy, nationalism, and socialism. It was as if everyone suddenly woke up and said, "Maybe we should rethink how we're doing things!"

Important People: Kaiser Wilhelm II and Tsar Nicholas II

In Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II was all about making Germany a global powerhouse. In Russia, Tsar Nicholas II was trying to hold onto power even as people were demanding changes. These leaders were like the captains of their country's teams, steering them into an uncertain future.

Tale of Two Systems: Monarchy vs. Democracy

To begin, we need to think about the decline of monarchies taking place at this time. People were questioning why one person (especially kings and queens) should have all the power. They wanted a say in how things were run, and that's where democracy comes in.



Figure 3 1905 Russian Revolution

Dates to Remember: 1905 Russian Revolution

In 1905, people in Russia said, "enough is enough" and revolted against the Tsar. They didn't overthrow him (that comes later), but it was a big wake-up call. People wanted change, and they wanted it now!

Alliances and Enemies: The Friendships and Frenemies

Countries started making alliances, promising to have each other's backs. But they also had frenemies—countries they didn't get along with. There was an arms race between Germany and Britain, who were definitely not on each other's holiday card lists.

Social Issues: The Gap Between Rich and Poor

Not everyone was living the good life. Many were ultra-rich (the cocktail party crowd), but there were also very poor people struggling to get by. Many of them were starting to demand better conditions and more rights, joining labor unions.

Why This Matters to You

So why should you care about Europe a hundred years ago? Because it sets the stage for everything that comes next, from World War I to the way we think about government and rights today. Plus, it's a reminder that change doesn't just happen; people make it happen, whether they're kings, queens, or ordinary citizens.

Pre-existing sentiments towards Jews.

Fasten your seat belts because our time machine is taking another detour. This time, we're focusing on a pretty serious topic: how people felt about Jews in Europe before World War I. Spoiler alert—it wasn't all friendship and good vibes. Are you ready to dive in?

The Long History: Jews in Europe

First, let's rewind the tape a bit. Jews have been living in Europe for centuries, but they often found themselves treated as outsiders. They had different traditions, followed a different religion, and sometimes even spoke different languages. This made them easy targets to blame when things went wrong.

Important Figures: Theodor Herzl



Theodor Herzl was a Jewish journalist who saw how badly Jews were being treated. He started to think that maybe Jews needed a place they could call their own, and he became a big voice for what came to be called "Zionism," the movement to establish a Jewish homeland.

Pogroms and Persecutions: A Dark Chapter

In some parts of Europe, like Russia and Poland, the situation became terrifying for Jews. There were terrible riots called "pogroms," where angry mobs would attack Jewish neighborhoods. Jews were basically being bullied, but on a much larger scale.

Figure 4 Theodor Herzl

Dates to Remember: The Kishinev Pogrom, 1903.

In 1903, one of the most infamous pogroms happened in a city called Kishinev, now in modern-day Moldova. During this terrible event, dozens of Jews were killed, and hundreds were injured. It was a dark moment that made many Jews think about leaving Europe.

Restrictions and Stereotypes: Not Just Physical Harm

But it wasn't just physical attacks. Jews faced all sorts of restrictions, including laws forbidding them to live in certain places or do certain jobs. There were also lots of stereotypes about Jews, including the idea that they were greedy or sneaky—none of which were true, of course.



Figure 5 Captain Alfred Dreyfus

Dreyfus Affair: A Trial That Shook France

In France, a Jewish army officer named Alfred Dreyfus was falsely accused of spying. The trial that followed showed just how deep anti-Jewish feelings could go, even in countries that considered themselves enlightened and democratic. The Dreyfus Affair, as it was called, was traumatic, and had people arguing all over France—and much of the world!

Europe before World War I

PART 2 IMPACT





Why This Matters to You

So, why is this important for you to know? Because understanding the prejudices and hardships that Jews faced helps us understand the bigger picture of European history. It also teaches us the importance of standing up against discrimination and prejudice, no matter who it's aimed at.



Key Points to remember from Chapter 1

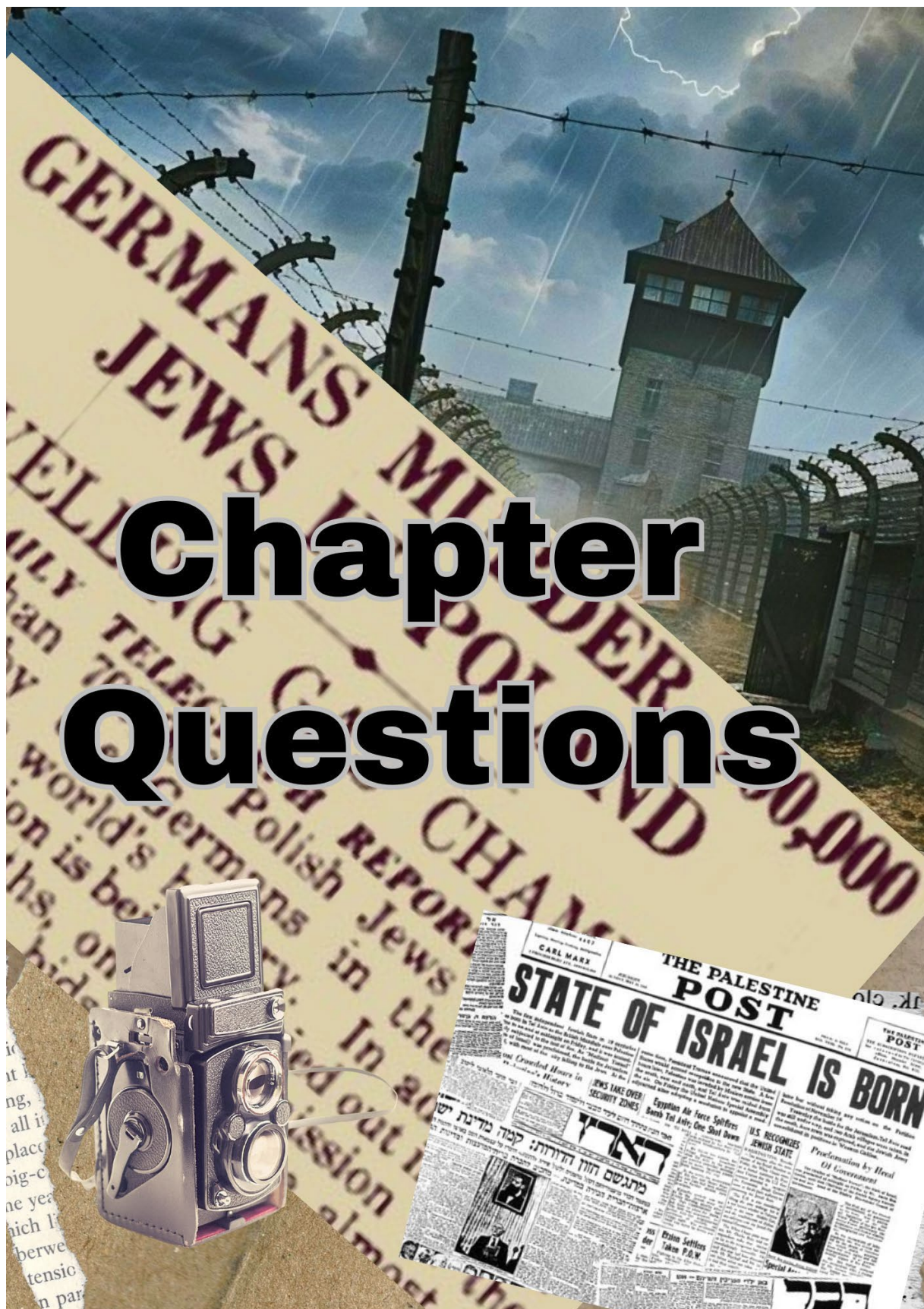
- A diverse mix of European countries with monarchies.
- Rise of democracy, nationalism, socialism.
- Kaiser Wilhelm II aimed for Germany's global power.
- Tsar Nicholas II faced demands for change in Russia.
- Decline of monarchies, increasing interest in democracy.
- 1905 Russian Revolution marked a significant change.
- Formation of alliances and rivalries, notably Germany vs. Britain.
- Economic disparities between rich and poor.
- Rise of labor unions
- Jews in Europe faced marginalization and discrimination.
- Theodor Herzl advocated Zionism.
- Pogroms and persecutions against Jews, notably the 1903 Kishinev pogrom.
- Alfred Dreyfus's trial in France highlighted antisemitism.
- These events set the stage for future developments in Europe and World War I.

The Rise of the Nazi



The Longest Hatred





**GERMANS MURDER 700
JEWES IN POLAND**

1. How did the socio-political climate in Europe prior to World War I contribute to the rise of nationalism and socialism.

Jude

2. What role did significant figures like Kaiser Wilhelm II and Tsar Nicholas II play in shaping their countries' destinies during this period?

Chicago Daily Tribune
HITLER SEIZES 20,000 JEWS

GERMANS MURDER 700
JEWS IN POLAND

3. Examine how the decline of monarchies impacted the political landscape of Europe. What were the long-term effects of this shift?

Jude

4. Discuss the significance of the 1905 Russian Revolution in the context of European history. What did it signify for the future of Russia and Europe as a whole?

Chicago Daily Tribune
HITLER SEIZES 20,000 JEWS

GERMANS MURDER 700
JEWS IN POLAND

5. Reflect on the pre-existing sentiments towards Jews in Europe as described in the chapter. How did these sentiments set the stage for future antisemitic policies?

Jude

Chicago Daily Tribune
HITLER SEIZES 20,000 JEWS

CHAPTER notes

[illegible]



Holocaust Study Guides

Chapter 1

Study Guide: Europe Before World War I

Political Landscape: Europe in the early 20th century was characterized by a mix of monarchies and emerging democratic ideals.

Key Monarchs:

Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany: Focused on expanding Germany's global influence and military power.

Tsar Nicholas II of Russia: Faced growing demands for democratic reforms and social change.

Rise of New Ideologies:

Democracy: The idea that people should have a voice in their government gained popularity.

Nationalism: Strong feelings of national pride and unity emerged, sometimes leading to tensions between countries

Socialism: This ideology advocated for greater economic equality and worker rights.

1905 Russian Revolution: This uprising against Tsar Nicholas II demonstrated the growing dissatisfaction with autocratic rule and the desire for political and social reforms.

Alliances and Rivalries: European nations formed alliances for mutual protection, but also developed rivalries, particularly between Germany and Britain.³ This arms race contributed to growing tensions.

Social and Economic Issues:

Economic Disparity: A large gap existed between the wealthy elite and the impoverished working class.

Labor Unions: Workers organized to demand better working conditions and wages.

Antisemitism:

Historical Context: Jews had faced centuries of discrimination and prejudice in Europe.

Theodor Herzl and Zionism: In response to growing antisemitism, Herzl advocated for the establishment of a Jewish homeland.

Pogroms: Violent attacks against Jewish communities, such as the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903, highlighted the extreme dangers Jews faced.

Restrictions and Stereotypes: Jews often faced legal restrictions and harmful stereotypes that limited their opportunities and fueled prejudice.

Dreyfus Affair: This French trial exemplified how deeply ingrained antisemitism was, even in seemingly enlightened societies.

Significance: Understanding the events and ideologies of pre-World War I Europe is essential to understanding the causes of the war and its lasting impact on the world.⁴⁸⁹ The rise of new political ideas, the clash of national interests, and the persistence of social inequalities all contributed to the volatile atmosphere that ultimately led to war.

Using the Glossary of Terms for Chapter 1

Refer to this Glossary of Terms before and during your reading of Chapter 1 to better understand key concepts and terminology. Use it actively to enhance your grasp of the material and integrate these terms into your study notes. If any term is unclear, revisit its definition here or discuss it during class to deepen your understanding.

1. Weimar Republic: The democratic government of Germany from 1919 to 1933, which ended with the rise of the Nazi party.
2. Treaty of Versailles: The peace treaty that concluded World War I, imposing heavy reparations and territorial losses on Germany, which contributed to economic hardship and political instability.
3. Great Depression: A severe worldwide economic downturn that began in 1929, severely affecting the Weimar Republic and contributing to social unrest and the rise of extremist political movements, including the Nazis.
4. Nazi Party (NSDAP): National Socialist German Workers' Party; a far-right, ultranationalist political party led by Adolf Hitler that gained power in Germany in 1933.
5. Adolf Hitler: Leader of the Nazi Party who became Chancellor of Germany in 1933 and Führer in 1934, leading to the establishment of a totalitarian regime.
6. Reichstag Fire: An arson attack on the German parliament building in 1933, which the Nazis used as a pretext to suspend civil liberties and suppress political opposition.
7. Enabling Act: A 1933 law that gave Adolf Hitler's government the authority to enact laws without the involvement of the Reichstag, effectively establishing a legal dictatorship.
8. Aryan: A term used in Nazi racial theory to describe people of Northern European racial background who were considered the master race.
9. Anti-Semitism: Hostility to, prejudice, or discrimination against Jews. A central tenet of Nazi ideology.
10. Führerprinzip (Leader Principle): The Nazi organizational principle that demanded absolute obedience to the leader, Adolf Hitler, thereby centralizing authority directly in his hands.
11. SS (Schutzstaffel): Originally Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS was transformed under Heinrich Himmler into a massive organization responsible for many of the crimes against humanity during the Third Reich.

12. SA (Sturmabteilung or Storm Detachment): The Nazi Party's original paramilitary wing, known as the Brownshirts; played a key role in Hitler's rise to power.

13. Gleichschaltung: The process of Nazification by which Nazi Germany successively established a system of totalitarian control over all aspects of society.

14. Night of the Long Knives: A 1934 purge that consolidated Hitler's absolute hold on power by eliminating potential rivals within the Nazi Party, including the leadership of the SA.

15. Lebensraum (Living Space): A pivotal concept in Nazi ideology which called for the expansion of German territories into Eastern Europe to provide space for the Aryan population.

This glossary for Chapter 1 provides students and readers with essential terms and concepts that are crucial for understanding the historical context and developments leading up to the establishment of the Third Reich. This foundation will support further exploration into the more specific events of the Holocaust in subsequent chapters.

Timeline

Chapter 1

Summary

The excerpt from *Chapter 1.pdf* provides an overview of Europe in the years preceding World War I. The chapter highlights the **contrasting forces** of traditional monarchies and the **emerging ideologies** of democracy, nationalism, and socialism, using the examples of **Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany** and **Tsar Nicholas II of Russia** to illustrate this tension. The chapter then **explores the historical context of antisemitism in Europe**, focusing on the **challenges faced by Jewish communities** including pogroms, discrimination, and stereotypes. The chapter concludes by noting the importance of understanding these **prejudices and hardships** to grasp the larger picture of European history.

Timeline of Events:

Pre-20th Century:

For Centuries: Jews have resided in Europe, often facing marginalization and discrimination.

Early 20th Century:

1903: The Kishinev Pogrom in Russia, a violent anti-Jewish riot, results in dozens of deaths and hundreds injured.

1905: The Russian Revolution erupts as citizens demand political and social reforms from Tsar Nicholas II. While unsuccessful in overthrowing the Tsar, the revolution signifies the growing discontent with monarchical rule and the desire for change.

Unspecified Time Period (Pre-World War I):

Ongoing: Growing tension and rivalry between European powers, particularly an arms race between Germany and Great Britain.

Ongoing: Social and economic disparities widen, leading to the rise of labor unions and calls for improved working conditions and rights for the poor and working class.

Ongoing: Anti-Semitism continues to be a prevalent issue in Europe, with Jews facing discrimination, stereotypes, and legal restrictions.

The Dreyfus Affair: French Jewish army officer Alfred Dreyfus is falsely accused and convicted of treason in a trial fueled by anti-Semitism. The affair divides French society and exposes deep-seated prejudices against Jews.

Emergence of Zionism: Theodor Herzl, a Jewish journalist, witnesses the escalating anti-Semitism in Europe and advocates for Zionism, a movement aiming to establish a Jewish homeland.

Cast of Characters:

Rulers:

Kaiser Wilhelm II: The German Emperor with ambitions to elevate Germany's global power and influence. He engaged in an arms race with Great Britain, contributing to the growing tensions in Europe.

Tsar Nicholas II: The Russian Emperor struggling to maintain his authority amidst growing calls for reform and the 1905 Russian Revolution. His inability to address the people's demands further destabilized Russia.

Key Figures:

Theodor Herzl: A Jewish journalist and the founder of the Zionist movement. Deeply affected by the widespread anti-Semitism, Herzl championed the establishment of a Jewish homeland as a solution to persecution.

Alfred Dreyfus: A Jewish French army officer wrongly accused and convicted of treason in the infamous Dreyfus Affair. His trial exposed the rampant anti-Semitism in France, sparking widespread debate and social division.

Groups:

European Monarchies: Ruling families and institutions across Europe facing increasing pressure and challenges from growing democratic ideals and social movements.

Jews in Europe: A long-established community experiencing persistent marginalization, discrimination, violence, and legal restrictions. Pogroms, such as the Kishinev Pogrom, highlight the extreme dangers they faced.

Labor Unions: Organizations of workers that emerged in response to growing economic disparities and poor working conditions. They advocated for workers' rights, better pay, and improved treatment, playing a significant role in the social changes of the time.