

Activity: Map Studies

Recommended Age Group: Middle School

Recommended Subject: Interdisciplinary; Social Studies (Geography, World Cultures, Political Studies, Psychology and Sociology)

Summary:

Activity worksheets include questions that are progressive in content and expectations, are interdisciplinary in nature, and are suitable for groupwork and research projects.

Holocaust Education: Map Studies
Part 1: A Look at Central Europe Today

Name _____

Date _____

Map needed: Central Europe Today

Period _____

Use the map of Central Europe Today to help you answer the following questions.

1. Write in the names of the countries shown on the map.
2. Make a chart with three columns labeled “Large” – “Medium” – “Small” and place the names of the countries you feel fit into each of these columns based on their size.
3. Which of the countries on this map have you heard about in news reports? What are some of the current events of Central Europe? Which of these events are new (within the past 6 months)? Which have been ongoing for over 6 months? Have any events been ongoing for more than a year? If so, why?
4. Why do we hear about current events in places so far away?
5. Can events in Europe affect what happens in the United States? Why or why not?
6. What languages are spoken in Central Europe?
7. Do you think European children learn to speak more than one language? Why or why not?
8. Do you think American children should learn to speak more than one language? Why or why not?
9. How big is Central Europe, shown on this map, compared to the United States?
10. How does the size of Europe and its countries effect how the people interact with each other across national borders?

Middle School – Geography, World Cultures, Reading, Critical Thinking
Holocaust Studies: Maps

Name _____

Part 2: Europe Before and After WWI

Date _____

Maps needed: Europe Before 1919
Europe After 1919

Period _____

Use maps of Europe before 1919 and after 1919 to help you answer the following questions.

1. On the Europe before 1919 map, identify the countries that fought together as the Central Powers in WWI and color them green.
2. On the Europe before 1919 map, identify the countries that fought together as the Allies in WWI and color them blue.
3. On the Europe after 1919 map, color the Central Powers countries green. Compare the before and after maps. What has changed? Where are the most changes noticeable?
4. Identify the major cities in Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, England, Romania, Bulgaria, Russia/Soviet Union, and Turkey.
5. Germany was forced to accept responsibility for causing WWI. Why?
6. Find out which countries suffered the most in terms of lives lost and cost to rebuild. Make a chart showing this information. Place a green checkmark by the Central Powers countries and a blue checkmark by the Allied countries. What do the results of the chart show you?
7. What happened to the value of the German Mark? Give three examples of how the change in value affected the people of Germany.
8. What events and results of WWI caused the economic changes in Europe? How do you think these events and results might have lead to a second world war?
9. Adolf Hitler eventually became Germany's leader. How do you think the results of WWI may have helped him and the Nazi party gain the support of the German people?

Middle School - Geography, World Cultures, Research, Reading, Critical Thinking

Holocaust Education: Map Studies

Part 3: Comparing Pre-World War II Germany
To Germany Today

Name _____

Date _____

Maps needed: Europe Today
Central Europe Today
Europe Before 1919
Europe After 1919
Europe (1939)

Period _____

Use current maps of Europe and Central Europe along with maps of Europe from before 1919, after 1919, and 1939. Use all five maps along with “Part 1: A Look at Central Europe Today” to help you answer the following questions.

1. Compare the size of Germany in each of the maps. In which map did Germany have the most land? In which map did Germany have the least land?
2. Write a paragraph about why Germany’s border changed from before 1919 to after 1919. Be sure to look for both gains and losses in territory and briefly explain what happened.
3. From before 1919 to after 1919, what other countries were affected by Germany’s border changes?
4. In which direction did Adolf Hitler direct his armies as he began to gain territory? Why do you think he chose to move that way? In what ways did another country’s military strength or political beliefs influence Hitler’s decisions?
5. From after 1919 to 1939, as the Nazi Party continued to gain power and territory, which countries became targets of Hitler’s armies? Why?
6. From after 1919 to 1939, which countries did Hitler choose not to attack? Why?
7. Which countries fought Nazi invasion? Read about the various invasions. How long did each country fight before it fell under Nazi rule? How many lives were lost both German and in each of the countries invaded?
8. Were there any countries that welcomed Hitler’s arrival? Why?

Middle School – Geography, World Cultures, Civics, Reading, Critical Thinking,
Research/Library Skills

Holocaust Education: Map Studies

Part 4: The Holocaust and the War

Name _____

Date _____

Maps needed: Europe Today

Europe After 1919

Europe (1939)

Europe (1942)

Europe (1945)

Period _____

Use maps of Europe from Europe after 1919, 1939, 1942, 1945, and today, along with “Part 1: A Look at Central Europe Today” and “Part 3: Comparing Pre-World War II Germany to Germany Today,” to help you answer the following questions.

1. Compare the 1942 map to the current map. Make a list of all the countries shown on the current map that were under Nazi rule in 1942.
2. Which countries remained neutral during WWII? How and why? Give explanations for each country that remained neutral.
3. Make a six-column chart. In the first column, list the European countries that existed after 1919. Research the population of each of those countries and write this information in the second column.
4. For the third column, research and document the Jewish population of each of those countries as of 1934.
5. In the fourth column, determine what percentage of the total population in each country was considered Jewish (based on the Nuremberg Laws, written in 1935).
6. For the fifth column, how many Jews survived from each country as of 1945?
7. In the sixth column, determine what percentage of the Jewish population survived the Holocaust.
8. Consider the number of students who are in your class right now. If you and your classmates had all been Jews living in Poland during WWII, how many students would still be in your class at the end of the war?
9. If you and your classmates had been Jews living in Denmark during WWII, how many students would still be in your class at the end of the war?
10. What factors helped to determine the number of survivors from country to country?

Middle School – Geography, World Cultures, Math, Critical Thinking, Research,
Reading, Organization, Drawing Conclusions

Holocaust Education: Map Studies

Part 5: Railroad Routes to Auschwitz

Name _____

Date _____

Maps needed: Railroad Routes to Auschwitz
Europe (1942)

Period _____

Use the map of Europe (1942) as you study the map showing the railroad routes that lead to Auschwitz Extermination Camp and to help you answer the following questions. For marking the map, you will need three different colored pens, pencils, or highlighters.

1. On the Railroad Routes to Auschwitz map, locate and write the names of the following capitals and cities: Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, Hamburg, Munich, Oslo, Paris, Pristina, Rome, and Vienna.
2. Using a different color, write the names of the following ghettos: Bialystok, Grodno, Kovno, Lodz, Lublin, Radom, Theresienstadt, and Vilna.
3. Using a third color, write the names of the following concentration camps: Buchenwald, Narva, Sachsenhausen, Salonica, and Westerbork. You will need to mark Kovno in this color also because it was converted into a camp in 1943.
4. Using the scale provided on the map, estimate the distance trains traveled to Auschwitz from the following ghettos and camps: Buchenwald, Lodz, Narva, Salonica, Theresienstadt, Vilna, and Westerbork.
5. Read the selected paragraphs from survivor testimonies. In each, determine how long the person spent on a train, how far it traveled, and how fast it traveled if it did not stop during the trip. Figure distances in both kilometers and miles.
6. Auschwitz was in operation as an extermination and concentration camp from March 1942 until November 1944. How many months is this (be sure to include both of these months in your total)?
7. The boxcars used to transport people to Auschwitz were 30 ft. long and 8 ft. wide. How many square feet is this?
8. Each boxcar contained 100 to 120 people. When a boxcar held 120 people, what was the average amount of space each person had?
9. From reading the survivor testimonies, what did you find to be the worst aspect of these train journeys?

Middle School - Geography, Math, Reading, Logic, Critical Thinking

Holocaust Studies: Map Skills
Part 6: To Stay or Leave

Name _____

Date _____

Maps needed: Europe (1939)
Europe (1942)

Period _____

Use the maps of Europe from 1939 and 1942 to help you answer the following questions.

1. In the mid-1920s, the Nazi Party in Germany was still small in number, was not strongly supported in national elections, and was not yet popular in major cities. In order to increase its membership, the Nazi Party focused its efforts in small and rural towns. This strategy was very successful. Why do you think people in rural areas were more likely to join the Nazi Party?
2. The Nazi Party was often identified with young men of lower or middle class. Why do you think the Nazi Party would be popular with this group of people? Do you think racist groups are like this today? Why or why not?
3. As the Nazi Party gained control and acceptance, laws were enacted to restrict the freedom and rights of the Jewish people living in Germany. Read about some of the laws that were enacted in the 1930s, including the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. How do you think this changed how Germans treated their Jewish friends and neighbors?
4. With Hitler and the Nazi Party continuing to gain control in Germany, many Jews decided to leave the country. On the map of Europe, highlight or color Belgium, England, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Most Jews who stayed in Europe went to one of these five countries. What is noticeable about their location? Which of these countries later came under Nazi control, thus endangering the Jews living there? Which of these countries was the "safest" to go to? Why?
5. What was the Evian Conference and how did its outcomes affect the Jews of Europe?
6. Read about the voyage of the St. Louis in May of 1939. How did it make you feel? On the 1942 map, draw arrows from the Atlantic Ocean toward all of the countries that eventually accepted the ship's passengers. Now draw in dark pencil or pen the border of Germany in 1942, including all of the countries that came under Nazi control. What do you think of the statement, "Most of the passengers never really left Germany after all"?
7. Draw arrows from Germany to Austria and Poland. Why was Austria "invaded" peacefully and why was Poland an early and easy target for invasion?
8. So many Jews chose not to leave Germany or its surrounding countries despite opportunities to do so. Why do you think someone would choose to stay?

Middle School - Geography, Research, Reading, Critical Thinking, Decision Making

Holocaust Studies: Questions to Ponder and Research

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

1. Why would books be outlawed and destroyed?
2. Why was Poland a primary target of Hitler?
3. What event would have to occur in your life that would convince you to leave everything and go to a foreign country?
4. Why did so many Jews stay/not leave?
5. How did Germans perceive Hitler? Why was he followed so loyally and by so many?
6. What character differences were there between resisters and non-resisters?
7. What will happen in the next 20 years with Holocaust education?
8. What did Jews need to survive the Holocaust?
Resources: Emotional, Mental, Intellectual, Financial, Physical, Social
9. Why were children also killed?
10. What occupations were the most controlled by the Nazis and why?
11. Why did other countries not react or respond to the well-known things the Nazis were doing?
12. Identify three to five resisters and describe how each contributed to the resistance. What chances did they take? What would have happened to them and their families if they had been caught? What resources did they have that helped them succeed?
13. What's the difference between physical and emotional abuse? How were each used against Jews? Which was more powerful and why?

Part 1: A Look at Central Europe Today

- Q1 - Review current map of Europe, learn where countries are, their capitals, and the correct spelling.
- Q3, Q4, Q5 - Review major current or recent events in Europe
For example: the war in Kosovo.
- Determine effects on the United States: economic, danger to our military personnel, family life here is disrupted when American soldiers go to other countries, children who are without a parent because of military service. ***Think of discussion items from a 12-year-old's perspective.
- Determine effects on the children in Kosovo: bombings, ability to go to school, knowing someone who has been killed, lack of goods (water, food, electricity, medical supplies and hospitals, money), a parent's loss of job means no money
- Q6 - Familiarize yourself with the various languages spoken in Europe. Have children tell you, then you add more.
- Q8, Q10 - Discuss advantages of being multi-lingual: jobs, traveling, being able to learn about and understand other people and cultures.
- Q9 - Have a map of the world or the United States available for the children to compare.

Part 2: Europe Before and After WWI

- Q1, Q2 - Know which countries around the world fought for the Central Powers and which ones fought for the Allies. Let children know that the word "allies" means "friends." That will help them remember that the United States were Allies during both wars.
- Q3 - Note especially the changes between Germany and France, and Germany and Poland, and the boundary changes that resulted from the Treaty of Versailles.
- Q4 - Know the capitals and their correct spelling ahead of time.
- Q5 - Research the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on Austria-Hungary while he was visiting Sarajevo.
- Q6 - Research ahead of time. Be aware that different sources may provide conflicting or very varied information. Have in mind "consensus" answers.
- Q7 - Research ahead of time. One encyclopedia noted that from December of 1941 to December of 1942 the cost of one gold piece went from 46 DM to 1753 DM. Stories of a loaf of bread being bought with wheelbarrows full of money are true.
- Q8 - Examples of answers should include the extreme changes in the value of the DM; buildings and factories destroyed often meant the loss of jobs for many; Germany's loss of territory brought numerous problems and changes as well as bitterness of the German people. Discuss how the German people's anger and desperation could lead them to want to fight, to win back what they had lost, and to regain lost pride.
- Q9 - Question 8 leads to discussion here. An extremely important point to make with students is that Hitler was not seen as a murdering monster to the German people in the early 1930s. An excellent way to lead students to understand Hitler from the German people's point of view is to do the following:
1. In an open forum, have students come up with the names of people who are remembered for being good, effective leaders. Name leaders who helped improve the lives of their followers. Have a short discussion about 4-5

- people named. Names like John F. Kennedy, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Queen Elizabeth I, and Gandhi might be a few names brought up.
2. Then, on the chalkboard, make a separate list of words that describe good and effective leaders. Words like strong, intelligent, kind, giving, charismatic, enthusiastic, hard working, and effective speaker should be among the answers.
 3. Finally, make a chart listing the leaders' names across the top and the descriptors down the side. Put checkmarks in boxes below each name for all words that describe that person.
 4. Now, at the end of the top row of names, add Adolf Hitler and ask the students to check off all of the listed words that also describe him – intelligent, charismatic, hard working, and effective speaker (of the terms listed above) should be checked. Make the point to the students that it is this Hitler that the people of Germany got to know and respect. He was responsible for the creation of many jobs (having the Autobahn built), and he spoke to the people about rebuilding German pride at a time when they were in disappear. Continue discussion on his charisma and effective speaking ability.

Part 3: Comparing Pre-World War II Germany to Germany Today

Q1, Q2, Q3 - Note changes in German and Polish territories as well as land along the German-French border.

Q4, Q5 - Research Poland's political strength. Be sure students realize that Germany's eastward movement was, if nothing else, an attempt to regain land lost after WWI.

Q6 - Research the agreement between Denmark and Germany and reasons why Great Britain was not considered a threat to Germany.

Q7 - A lot of reading will be needed for conducting a discussion on this. At a minimum, research the invasion of Poland for class discussion.

Q8 - Research why Austria welcomed Hitler's army. Also, read about Hitler's and Stalin's relationship prior to the start of WWII and why Stalin later joined the Allies to fight Germany.

Extended discussion topics (also for use with other activities including Part 6: To Stay or Leave):

- What was the weather like during the winters from 1939 to 1942? During which seasons did most invasions begin and do you think weather was a consideration in deciding when and where to attack? How did the weather affect how, when, and where Jews would hide or escape?
- Find a physical map of Europe (not found on the Holocaust CD at this time). How did the topography of Central Europe affect where Jews could hide or escape to? Where there places that were easier than others for Jews to travel to by foot? What distances would one have to travel to escape to a "safe" country from (1) various major cities, (2) various ghettos, or (3) various concentration camps? If traveling by foot (20-25 miles per day), how long would it take to get to safety? Have students discuss traveling conditions and what would be needed for such a journey.

Part 4: the Holocaust and the War

Q2 - Research ahead of time. Be sure to prepare for a discussion on current events surrounding the controversy of Switzerland's banking industry – that money taken from

Jews during the Holocaust was put into Swiss bank accounts and Jews and their descendents are trying to get the money back.

- Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7 - Make this chart ahead of time, even if just on paper, with acceptable answers (range of numbers) so as to guide students as they complete their charts.
- Q8, Q9 - Research numbers ahead of time, review 2-3 sources, as accounts will vary. Do not assume that by subtracting an ending (1945 or so) number from a beginning (1933) number you will have the number of people who died. Search for the number of Polish Jews who died or were killed. For simplest purposes, one can figure that 2 out of 3 European Jews were killed. If Poland had 3 million Jews in 1933, that would mean that approximately 2 million died. Denmark's situation is quite different, however. A report from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum states that only 51 of the more than 7,500 Danish Jews died; most Danish Jews were transported to neutral Sweden before the Nazis arrived in Denmark. Of 500 Danish Jews brought to Theresienstadt ghetto, all but 51 survived the Holocaust.
- Q10 - The class should compare the differences between Poland and Denmark. Other countries to discuss include Great Britain, France, and, of course, Germany. Research the French attitude toward immigrant Jews versus French Jews – Vichy France could be seen as siding with the Nazis when one considers some of the anti-Semitic laws that were created during WWII.

Part 5: Railroad Routes to Auschwitz

- Q1, Q2, Q3 - Be familiar as to where the cities are and in which countries they are located.
- Q4 - For advanced students and higher grades, expectations can include a more detailed measurement or use of a physical map (consider traveling over mountains or across rivers). Further study might include researching the miles or kilometers traveled per day and figuring the amount of time it took to get from place to place.
- Q5 - Three are included below. The CD offers many, many more testimonies (most available from the Websites listed) that are very informative – take the time to read as many as you can and select more passages as is appropriate for the topics you discuss and the age level of your students.
- Q6 - Answer should be 33 months. Have students develop an understanding of this amount of time by counting back 33 months – have them determine how old were they and recall events from then.
- Q7 - A boxcar 30 ft. by 8 ft. would have 240 square feet. Have students measure the classroom. Is the amount of square feet in the classroom more or less than that of the boxcar? If the classroom is larger, use masking tape to mark the floor of 240 feet (the area does not have to be 30x8, it could be 10x24 or 12x20).
- Q8 - With the classroom floor marked with masking tape, have students stand within the 240 square-foot area. Realizing that 100-120 people had to fit into this area, students should figure that each person had approximately 2 square feet of space. Mark a number of spaces this size with masking tape on the floor and have a few students stand in these spaces. This should spark discussion about how people sat down, slept, and moved around. Students should also consider the lack of restrooms and food, that some people had luggage with them, many had young children and babies, and some people died

during the journey. Be willing to discuss questions they raise because those who had to travel this way during the Holocaust had the same questions and concerns!

Q9 - Allow open discussion and realize there will be a lot of “worst aspect” answers!

Testimonies from Auschwitz survivors:

Lucille E. (from <http://remember.org/witness/wit.sur.luc.html>)

Alexander Ehrmann (from Holocaust Survivor Oral Histories)

Primo Levi (from <http://www.inch.com/~ari/levi2a.html> and his book Survival in Auschwitz (Collier Books, 1971, 4th printing)

Website:

Interviewer: And these tracks, and these freight cars we see as we pass by, what kind of effect do they have on you?

Primo Levi: There, I would say that they are precisely the trains to have an explosive reflex.

This is what impresses me the most because still now, to see a car in a freight train has a violent, evoking effect on me, much more I'd say than to see again the villages and the places, Auschwitz itself. Having traveled for 5 days in a sealed box car is an experience one doesn't forget.

Book (pp. 12-17)

Part 6: To Stay or Leave

Q1 - Answers may include: lack of education, lack of access to news of other places. It was easier for Nazis to control the access to news from people of small areas and, therefore, provide them with what the Nazis wanted them to know. If all the townspeople heard was about how Jews in the big cities were making life difficult for “good and hard working Germans,” it would be easy for the people to believe that Jews were bad and that the Nazi Party was there to help the situation.

Q2 - This goes along with the answer from question 1. Young people who lack education and lack the ability to know how to separate what is fact and what is opinion or bias would lead them to believe only what they hear. Nazis controlled this and counted on its effect – and they were right, undereducated youth joined the party enthusiastically!

Q9, Q10 - Research numbers from a few sources and come to a general number to work with. This question requires students to do ratios and percentages so be prepared to teach these math skills. The main point is that it was much more likely for a Danish Jew to survive the Holocaust than a Polish Jew. Discuss the reasons why: length of time each country was occupied, available escape routes for Jews, proximity to Germany, for example.