

Lesson Title: A Primary Source from Nazi Germany: The Appeal of the Nazis (Part Two)

<b>Lesson Details:</b>		
<u>Unit:</u> Before the Holocaust: Jewish Life in Europe and the Rise of Nazism in Germany		<u>Duration:</u> One 45-50 minute class period, not including extension activities
<b>Lesson Notes for Teachers:</b>		
<p>Alfons Heck was only a little boy when he became enamored with Adolf Hitler. We might be tempted to dismiss his attraction to youth and inexperience except for the fact that so many adults shared his passion. The reading selection at the heart of this lesson describes the pageantry and emotional appeal of the Nazis. If you read between the lines, you may also discern the underlying conditions in Germany that made this situation possible. It should also be noted that it took Alfons Heck about three decades to fully acknowledge the evil of the Nazi regime and what happened to him as a part of it. In his later life in the United States, he has spoken to school groups together with a Jewish Holocaust survivor to share his “view from the inside” with students.</p>		
<b>Design Questions/Lesson Focus/Marzano Elements:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can individuals be persuaded to join groups that contradict previously-held beliefs or values?</li> <li>• Are people personally responsible for accepting false and/or harmful ideas communicated through propaganda and accepted by others in the community? Do the ages of the people in question impact their level of responsibility? If so, how?</li> </ul>		
<u>X</u> Introducing New Knowledge DQ2 Main Element: 6 – Identifying critical content	<u>X</u> Deepening or Practicing DQ3 Main Element: 18 – Helping students examine their reasoning	<u>X</u> Generating Hypotheses DQ4 Main Element: 22 – Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing
<b>Focus Standards/Benchmarks:</b> Please note – These lessons are designed to be flexible for use in a variety of Florida-approved middle and high school Social Studies and ELA courses. With minor adaptations, the activities described in the lesson may be used in a variety of settings. Only a few of the standards and benchmarks listed below will be used in any particular class. Teachers should choose the main skill and content standards/benchmarks that are most applicable for the courses they teach.		
<p>LAFS.68.RH.1.6-Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).</p> <p>LAFS.68.RH.1.9-Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.</p> <p>SS.912.W.7.5-Describe the rise of authoritarian governments in the Soviet Union, Italy, Germany, and Spain, and analyze the policies and main ideas of Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and Francisco Franco.</p>		
<b>Daily Learning Goal and Scale (Student-friendly language)</b>		
Students will evaluate the responses of individuals to the ideas and claims made by the Nazi leadership based on their individual circumstances, their position in society and the impact of recent historical events on Germany.		
<u>2.0 Simpler Content</u> The students will:	<u>3.0 Target</u> The students will:	<u>4.0 More Complex</u> The students will:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List the methods Adolf Hitler used to appeal to his followers.</li> <li>2. Identify personal and historical perspectives that effect</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze the methods Adolf Hitler used to appeal to his followers.</li> <li>2. Evaluate personal and historical perspectives that effect</li> </ol>	<p>Create a model for understanding diverse perspectives on issues of current importance that will avoid the problems revealed by the level of</p>

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interpretations of situations and events.	interpretations of situations and events.	popular support the Nazis managed to achieve among many German citizens in the 1930s.
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**Formative Assessment Strategies/Monitoring for Desired Effect:**

- Teacher observation and questioning of groups and individuals during the introduction activity.
- Teacher use of probing and redirecting questions during the text reading.
- Teacher questions and monitoring of discussions based on the film - before and after the screening and possibly at key points during the film and during the discussions after the film.
- Student written responses to the handout questions
- Exit slip: Student responses to the following questions: If you could go back in time, what would you have said to young Alfons if you had met him in the 1930's? What would you have said to Alfons if you had met him in his later years living in the U.S.?

**Lesson Sequence:**

Introduction/Hook: (May be done with students individually or organized into small groups.)

Display the Hitler Youth poster, entitled “Youth Serves the Leader” (but don’t translate the text for the students).  
[https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Ch06\\_Image03\\_large.jpg](https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Ch06_Image03_large.jpg)

Ask students to respond to the following questions:

1. What do you think is the main message of this poster? To whom is the message directed?
2. What visual elements included in the poster support your answer?

Instruction Steps:

1. Introduce this activity by telling students that they are going to read a short account written by a former Nazi. Tell them to pay attention not only to his words, but also to any hints he may give about how he feels now.
2. Pass out the handout and the worksheet.
3. Allow students time to read the selection and to complete the questions.
4. Discuss the student responses in class. Pay particular attention to question 5. Ask students what Heck meant when he wrote, “We never had a chance.”
5. Read the quote from Georg Zeidler (an adult storm trooper) found on page 26 of The Nazi Years.
6. Conduct a class discussion comparing this statement to the one by Alfons Heck.
7. View the film, *Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth*. Discuss any new insights students glean from this more detailed account of Alfons Heck’s experiences.

**Adaptation/Differentiation Strategies:**

The teacher may divide the reading selection into smaller chunks and check for understanding at key points. The teacher may stop the video at key points of the narrative to check for student understanding or use only key segments of the video, instead of the entire presentation. The teacher may identify key terms in the text and video prior to use and introduce this vocabulary prior to the lesson. The teacher may provide the students with basic background information about the Hitler Youth at the beginning of the lesson to help students successfully interpret the text and video content.

**Extended Learning:**

In order to explore other reasons why people may have been willing to follow the Nazis, it may help to look at the official Nazi Party Program. You will find it on pages 28-30 of The Nazi Years, or at

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<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/riseofhitler/25points.htm>. Ask students to number a blank sheet of paper from 1-25. Have them create two columns by drawing a vertical line down the center of the paper. Label the left column “Approve” and the right column “Disapprove”. Read each point of the 25 point party program aloud, asking students to mark on their paper whether they would approve or not. You may have to simplify them, rather than read them exactly as written.

Many people are surprised at how “normal” some of the planks of the Nazi Party Program were. It should be noted, however, that there were many items on this list the Nazis never sought to implement. Some seem to have been for propaganda purposes only.

Students may also read Parallel Journeys by Eleanor H. Ayer. This book combines some of Alfons’ reflections with those of Helen Waterford, a Jewish German girl persecuted by the Nazis. These very different accounts of the Nazi era are woven together by the author, who provides commentary on the first-hand testimonies as a secondary source.

Other oral histories from this time period will provide additional insights into the topics explored in this lesson. One great source for oral histories in print is, What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany – An Oral History by Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband. A fine source for videotaped interviews is the USC Shoah Foundation’s iWitness website for Holocaust survivor testimony interviews. This is a searchable database that provides access to over 1500 testimonies indexed by experience. The site contains student activities and other resources as well. The address for this website is <http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/>. Teachers need to register to access the full resources of the site, so allow time to complete the process prior to using this lesson extension activity.

**Resources and Materials:**

1. A copy of the quotation from A Child of Hitler by Alfons Heck (one per student)
2. Hitler Youth Poster - [https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Ch06\\_Image03\\_large.jpg](https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Ch06_Image03_large.jpg)
3. The “Appeal of the Nazis: A First Hand Account” worksheet
4. The Nazi Years - page 26
5. Film: *Heil Hitler: Confessions of a Hitler Youth*
6. (Optional) Parallel Journeys by Elanor Ayer
7. (Optional) What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany – An Oral History by Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband
8. (Optional) iWitness: <http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/>