

Lesson Title: The Allies: What did they know? What should they have done?

**Lesson Details:**

Unit: Rescue

Duration: One to two 45-50 minute class periods, not including extension activities

**Lesson Notes for Teachers:**

The questions that make up the title of this lesson are some of the most controversial of the entire Holocaust era. There is no single appropriate response to the issues raised. This history is complex and resists being reduced to simplistic generalizations. You may help students begin to wrestle with these questions by starting with some qualifications.

- Since the Holocaust developed over time, the responses of other countries must be evaluated according to what was happening at the time, not what was going to happen in the future. What was known in 1943 was not clearly foreseen in 1933 or even in 1938. When asking the questions above, we must take this into account.
- The war didn't begin until 1939. Countries deal with each other differently in peacetime than they do during times of war. Western nations did protest the treatment of Jews and other persecuted minorities, but it is unlikely under any circumstances that they would have started a war over the issue. It remained for Nazi Germany to start the war. Had Britain or France decided to attack Germany in the early 1930's, they would have done so for military or political reasons. Humanitarian concerns were considered to be diplomatic issues, if they were considered at all.
- The United States was not a "superpower" in the 1930's. At the time World War II began, Germany was militarily much more prepared for war. Even if this had not been the case, there were strong feelings of isolationism in the U.S. that made direct involvement in a European crisis unlikely. As it was, the U.S. didn't join the fight in World War II until attacked by Japan at Pearl Harbor.
- The main complaint about the response of other nations in the 1930's was that they did not allow large numbers of Jewish refugees to enter their countries. This was true. Many countries, including the U.S. had strong anti-immigration feelings and strict quotas on the numbers of immigrants allowed each year. Antisemitism also played a role in thwarting attempts to change the status quo. As a result, it was difficult for Jews to leave Germany even while the Nazis still allowed emigration.
- Once the war began, the main attitude of the Allies was that their first goal must be to win the war. Great Britain and the U.S. publicly announced that they would prosecute those guilty of crimes after the war, but it is unlikely that this had much impact on German policy. It has been suggested that the Allies should have bombed the killing facilities, but this was not acted upon. Some claimed it wasn't possible. Others said it would do more harm than good. Limited rescue schemes emerged from time to time, promoted by interested individuals and organizations, but none received official endorsement. The U.S. War Refugee Board, formed in 1944, helped to save about 200,000 Jews, but it came too late to help most. There was considerable foot-dragging even before that limited step was taken.

This topic will probably be a source of argument for some time to come. "What should the Allies have done?" is a good question, but don't expect unanimous agreement with any answer.

With these observations and qualifications in mind, students will benefit from studying the issue by reading and interpreting newspaper articles from the Holocaust era.

**Design Questions/Lesson Focus/Marzano Elements:**

- What responsibility do nations have to help oppressed people inside other nations?
- What responsibility do individuals have to help the oppressed within other societies?
- At what point does self-interest become selfishness?
- How can governmental or non-governmental international or multinational organizations help currently

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<p>oppressed people and help prevent oppression in the future?</p>		
<p><u>X</u> Introducing New Knowledge DQ2 Main Element: 6 – Identifying critical content</p>	<p><u>X</u> Deepening or Practicing DQ3 Main Element: 20 – Helping students revise knowledge</p>	<p><u>X</u> Generating Hypotheses DQ4 Main Element: 23 – Providing resources and guidance for cognitively complex tasks</p>
<p><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>		
<p>LAFS.68.RH.1.1-Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. LAFS.68.RH.1.2-Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions. LAFS.68.WHST.3.9-Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. SS.6.W.1.3 Interpret primary and secondary sources. SS.7.C.2.10-Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government. SS.912.A.6.1-Examine causes, course, and consequences of World War II on the United States and the world. SS.912.A.6.3-Analyze the impact of the Holocaust during World War II on Jews as well as other groups. SS.912.A.6.5-Explain the impact of World War II on domestic government policy. 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. SS.912.W.7.6 Analyze the restriction of individual rights and the use of mass terror against populations in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and occupied territories. SS.912.W.7.8 Explain the causes, events, and effects of the Holocaust (1933-1945) including its roots in the long tradition of anti-Semitism, 19th century ideas about race and nation, and Nazi dehumanization of the Jews and other victims</p>		
<p><b>Daily Learning Goal and Scale (Student-friendly language)</b></p>		
<p>Students will interpret multiple newspaper sources to assess the amount and quality of information available to Americans about the Holocaust, the impact that this information had on individual attitudes and government policy, and the barriers that prevented people from understanding the implications of the events reported.</p>		
<p><u>2.0 Simpler Content</u> Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List events reported in selected newspaper articles that reveal the extent of information available to Americans about the persecution of Jews and others by Nazi Germany.</li> <li>Identify possible reasons that Americans had difficulty believing or responding to information about the</li> </ol>	<p><u>3.0 Target</u> Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the accuracy and depth of information about the persecution of Jews and others by Nazi Germany reported in selected newspaper articles available to Americans.</li> <li>Analyze possible reasons that Americans had difficulty believing or responding to information about the</li> </ol>	<p><u>4.0 More Complex</u> Students will:</p> <p>Conduct an extended research project to compare reporting about various aspects of the Holocaust, comparing the depth and accuracy of reporting in several news sources over time.</p> <p>Based on information that was available to Americans on any given date, students will compose a</p>

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<p>Holocaust.</p> <p>3. Describe the impact of information about the Holocaust on American citizens and their leaders.</p>	<p>Holocaust.</p> <p>3. Assess the impact of information about the Holocaust on American citizens and their leaders.</p>	<p>newspaper article designed to inform Americans about the Holocaust and to encourage effective personal and governmental responses in a way that might have been more effective than the reporting that actually occurred.</p>
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**Formative Assessment Strategies/Monitoring for Desired Effect:**

- Teacher observation and questioning of groups and individuals at each step of the instructional process and during transitions between activities.
- Teacher use of probing and redirecting questions based on the selected newspaper article readings.
- Student written and oral discussion responses to the “Newspaper Activity Sheet” handout.
- Exit Slip: Respond to the following question: Which, if any, of these articles do you think would have motivated you to want to support government actions to help the people oppressed by Nazi Germany? Why did you choose that one?

**Lesson Sequence:**

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

Share the following quote by American scholar, Margo Dowling:

“The Allies did not do all they could do but, at the time, they did what they thought was best. To save the Jews meant stopping Nazi genocide, and to do that they had to first stop the Nazis.”

Ask students to respond to the following questions:

1. What evidence does Margo Dowling think we should use to judge the Allies efforts to help Jews?
2. Explain why you agree or disagree with her quote.

Instruction Steps:

1. Introduce the topic by reading pages 26-28 and page 66 from Tell Them That We Remember or summarize the content.
2. Tell students that they are about to read about the Holocaust in newspaper articles that were written at the time.
3. Pass out “The Record”. Explain to students that this publication contains more than just old newspaper articles. It also has articles and book quotes from recent times. It has background information, a chronology, a glossary of terms, and discussion guides. During this lesson, students will be using only some of the articles from the 1930’s and 40’s. Also note that some of the information in the articles is not entirely correct. Newspapers publish the news quickly. They don’t always have all the facts, nor do they always get the entire story correct.
4. Pass out the “Newspaper Activity Sheet”.
5. Allow students time to complete the activity. They may work individually or in groups.
6. Discuss the student responses to the activity questions.

**Adaptation/Differentiation Strategies:**

The teacher may divide the newspaper article reading selections into smaller chunks and check for understanding at key points.

The teacher may read one or more of the selections aloud, or have students do so in groups.

The teacher may identify key terms in the texts and prior to use and introduce this vocabulary prior to the lesson.

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The teacher may provide the students with basic background information about the historical events mentioned in the newspaper articles to increase student understanding.

**Extended Learning:**

There is an excellent lesson plan for a newspaper-based activity in the “Classroom Focus” section of Social Education: Teaching About the Holocaust, though teachers may develop a comparative newspaper research project independently. This will require accessing records of old newspapers, but should be well worth the effort. Interested students could also search records of local papers online or at the public library to see what news was printed about the Holocaust during or immediately after it was happening.

Students may also be interested in exploring rescue options that the Allied governments might have tried, but did not. Examples might include loosening immigration restrictions to help more refugees, giving more support to groups fighting Nazi Germany from within occupied territory, or bombing Auschwitz or the railroad tracks leading to Auschwitz.

**Resources and Materials:**

1. Tell Them That We Remember by Susan Bachrach
2. “The Record” Newspaper (from the trunk) 1 copy per student
3. The “Newspaper Activity Sheet”