

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER: Germany. Part 3: The experiences of Germans under the Nazis (1933-1945)

CONTROL (i)

Key words (underlined)

Key Dates

1933	Hitler became Chancellor– had limited power.
1934	Hitler became <i>Der Führer</i> (the leader)– was a dictator.
1939	Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on Germany. World War II began.
1945	Hitler committed suicide. Germany was defeated. World War II ended.

Propaganda

Propaganda	Information that is spread by a government to influence how people think and behave. It gives only certain points of view and often leaves out important facts. The Nazis used powerful propaganda to unite and get the support of the German people.
Indoctrinate	Another word for 'brainwash'- to teach someone to accept a belief without question. People were indoctrinated to believe Hitler was a god and saviour of Germany. Jews and communists were believed to have caused Germany's problems.
Goebbels	Responsible for propaganda as the Minister of Enlightenment and Propaganda. All forms of media and culture were brought under his control.
Media	The means of communication, such as newspapers, radio and cinema, that reach or influence people widely. Nazi propaganda was often kept simple and slogans were repeated by all forms of media. A popular slogan was 'one people, one empire, one leader.'
Newspapers	Only stories that supported the Nazis were allowed to be printed. Newspapers were given detailed instructions by Goebbels about what to write. Over 1,500 newspapers were closed down by 1934.
Radio	Nazis controlled all radio stations, which were used to put across Nazi ideas. Cheap radios were made that could only tune in to Nazi controlled stations. Foreign stations could not be picked up. Loudspeakers were placed in streets, factories and cafes to air radio broadcasts.
Cinema	The German film industry made over a hundred films a year. Goebbels read and approved all film scripts. All films– thrillers, comedies, dramas and factual films – had to carry a pro-Nazi message. A news report of Hitler's achievements was always shown before the main film.
Mass rallies	The Nazis organised huge meetings where people listened to choirs, bands, speeches and watched firework displays and air shows. All were designed to show how impressive and organised the Nazis were. The most famous was the Nuremberg rally held every year.
1936 Olympic Games	The Nazis used the Olympics, held in Berlin, as a massive propaganda event to demonstrate the superiority of the Aryan race. The stadium was, at the time, the largest in the world. Germany came top of the medal table. However, to the Nazis great dismay the black athlete Jesse Owens became the star of the Games. He won four gold medals.
Censorship	When the government tightly controls what people hear, read or see. This means anything considered unsuitable for the public is removed or banned. Books written by Jews or by authors opposed to the Nazis were banned. Theatre, cinema and art were all censored in the same way.
Culture	The values, morals, traditions and attitudes of a group of society; it relates to the music and films people watch and listen to, the art they create, the buildings they design and the behaviours they display. Nazis encouraged a return to traditional German values and culture.
Chamber of Culture	Goebbels set up this Nazi organisation that all musicians, writers, artists and actors had to be members of. Anyone who refused would not be allowed to work. Some people, such as Jews and communists, were banned from joining.
Music	Goebbels ruled music should be German or Austrian. Marching music, old folk songs and classical music by musicians like Beethoven and Mozart were popular. Some music popular in the Weimar period was banned. Jewish composers were banned. So was jazz because it had its origins among the black people of America.
Books	Goebbels created a list of banned books, which were removed from libraries and bookshops. In 1933 students were encouraged to burn piles of banned books looted from libraries. <i>Mein Kampf</i> was the best-selling book in Germany. Goebbels encouraged books about race, the glory of war and superiority of Nazis.
Art	In Weimar Germany, art tended to be modern and abstract. This type of art was labelled 'degenerate' by the Nazis and banned. Modern art was burned or put in exhibitions to show people how 'bad' it was. The Nazis favoured realistic and traditional paintings that fitted with Nazi <u>ideology</u> (ideas and beliefs). Nazi art showed strong, heroic 'pure' Germans, happy family scenes and lots of images of Hitler in heroic poses.

Repression (use of force and terror)

- **Police state:** This meant the country was controlled by the political police. The government had strict control over people's lives, especially by means of a secret police.
- **Heinrich Himmler:** The head of the SS. All police forces were put under his control.
- **SS (Blackshirts):** This was set up as Hitler's private bodyguard, but became the most important military group in Germany. The SS could arrest anyone for any reason, search homes and seize property. They also ran the concentration camps, and later, the death camps.
- **Gestapo:** Secret police of the Nazis. They did not wear uniforms. The Gestapo tapped telephone calls and opened mail. They had the power to arrest, imprison without trial, and torture anyone. They set up a huge network of informers. Even children were encouraged to report their parents if they said something negative about the Nazis.
- **Concentration camps:** These had been set up as prison camps for political opponents of the Nazis. Most prisoners were initially communists. They were forced to work hard and some were even tortured or worked to death.
- **Regular police and law courts:** These were under Nazi control. **Judges** had to take an oath of loyalty to Hitler. People could be arrested who had not committed a crime, but were suspected of being against the Nazis. They would not get a fair trial.

Opposition

- **Low-level opposition:** Some people grumbled about what the Nazis were doing, spread rumours or told anti-Hitler jokes– often in the privacy of their own homes.
- **Passive resistance:** Some people refused to give the 'Heil Hitler' salute. Others would not go to work (absenteeism) or work slowly (go-slow) to undermine Nazi efforts, particularly in the war.
- **Edelweiss Pirates:** Working-class, rebellious teenagers who refused to join the Hitler Youth. Some even attacked members of the Hitler Youth. The Nazi response became increasingly harsh. Pirates were arrested by the Gestapo and some even sent to concentration camps. In Cologne in 1944 Edelweiss Pirates teamed up with army deserters in armed conflict with the Nazis. 12 Pirates were publicly hanged.
- **Swing Youth:** Wealthier middle-class teenagers who openly showed their dislike of Nazi ideas by listening to jazz music. Jazz was banned by the Nazis. Some members were arrested and even sent to concentration camps.
- **White Rose group:** Led by brother and sister Hans and Sophie Scholl. The White Rose (symbol of peace) was the name given to a series of leaflets they printed. These were openly against Nazi values and the war. In 1943 the Gestapo arrested Hans, Sophie and other leaders who were tortured and executed.
- **July 1944 Bomb Plot:** There were around 50 attempts on Hitler's life. The July Bomb Plot was the closest any Germans got to assassinating Hitler. It was led by Colonel Stauffenberg and given the code-name 'Valkyrie.' Stauffenberg placed a bomb in Hitler's headquarters. However, the briefcase containing the bomb was moved just before it exploded. Hitler was only injured. 5000 people were killed after the plot, including Stauffenberg.

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Key words (underlined)

Children	
Nazi aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●The aim of <u>school</u>, <u>youth groups</u> and <u>propaganda</u> was to indoctrinate young people into accepting and supporting Nazi ideas. Boys were prepared to be the soldiers of the future and girls to become mothers and wives.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Teaching of school subjects was controlled to <u>indoctrinate</u> children in Nazi ideas and beliefs. ●Traditional <u>fairy tales</u> were altered to get very young children to support the Nazis. Heroes of the tales were 'brave Germans' and the villains communists or Jews. ●In nursery, children were taught the Nazi salute. The school day would begin and end with the salute.
Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●In <u>history lessons</u>, children were taught the Weimar Republic and its democratic government had betrayed Germany. ●<u>Race Studies</u> (<u>Eugenics</u>) was used to explain Nazi ideas on race- that Germans were the 'master' Aryan race and that others were inferior.
Youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Young people enjoyed the <u>Hitler Youth</u> (for boys) or <u>League of German Maidens</u> (for girls). ●They wore smart uniforms and marched in exciting parades with loud bands. ●They took part in a range of leisure activities, such as sport and gymnastics. Weekend camping and hiking trips gave children a sense of freedom. Older boys were trained to use rifles.
Propaganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Mass rallies</u> were organised specially for young people with marches, parades, bands, firework displays and speeches by Hitler. ●Rallies provided excitement, fun and a sense of belonging. Hitler was mobbed by screaming girls much like a modern pop-star. ●Special <u>films</u> carrying Nazi messages were made for children.

Women

Weimar (1919-33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Women had many rights and freedoms, e.g. right to vote and if they worked for the government their pay was equal to men. Many went to university and became lawyers, teachers and doctors.
Nazi aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Nazis wanted a high birth rate to fit with their plans to expand Germany's territory and settle Germans in other areas of Europe. ●Nazi propaganda made the role of women clear- the three Ks- <u>Kinder, Kirche and Küche</u> (Children, Church and Cooking). ●Women were not equal to men. When Hitler came to power, many female doctors, teachers, lawyers and judges were sacked.
Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Women were expected to follow traditional German peasant fashions - plain peasant costumes, hair in plaits or buns and flat shoes. ●Not expected to wear make-up or trousers, dye their hair or smoke in public. Discouraged from staying slim, because it was thought that thin women had trouble giving birth.
Policies to increase birth rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●A loan of 1000 marks was given out to newly married couples (the equivalent of a year's wages) to encourage them to have children. Kept 250 marks for each child they had. ●Motherhood Medal was awarded to women who had the most children. Mothers with eight children received the Gold Cross. ●German Women's League organised classes. These gave lessons in childcare, cooking and healthy eating. ●Nazis banned contraception and abortion. ●Homes for unmarried mothers were set up to allow unmarried women to become pregnant, often by 'racially pure' members of SS.

Christians

Catholics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●At first, Hitler cooperated with Catholic leaders. 1933 signed a Concordat (agreement) with the Pope. Hitler agreed to leave the Church alone and allowed it to keep control of its schools. In return, the Church agreed to stay out of politics. ●Hitler soon broke agreement. Nazis arrested Catholic priests and closed down Catholic schools and youth groups. ●1941 Archbishop Galen openly criticised the Nazis use of terror tactics, euthanasia (deliberate killing of a person) and concentration camps. Galen was put under house arrest until end of the war.
Protestants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Hitler took a harder line against Protestants. He brought their churches together into one 'Reich Church', which was under Nazi control. ●Known as 'German Christians', they wore Nazi uniforms and used the slogan –'the swastika on our chests and the Cross in our hearts.' ●Some Protestants opposed the Nazis. Pastor Martin Niemöller led a new Protestant group called the Confessional Church. ●Nazis banned the Confessional Church and arrested 800 of its pastors. Niemöller was sent to a concentration camp.

NAZI SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY (ii)

Reducing unemployment (economic policy)

- Hitler won so much support in 1933 because he promised to end the Depression. He had promised 'work and bread.'
- In 1933 six million Germans were unemployed. By 1939 the Nazis claimed no official unemployment.
- National Labour Service** was set up for young men (18-25 years). Did various jobs, e.g. digging and planting forests. Had to wear uniforms and live in camps, but were given free meals. They were given pocket money rather than wages.
- Public works schemes** were organised. New motorways (**autobahns**) were built. This gave work to nearly 100,000 people. Hospitals, schools and sports stadiums were built, giving work to more people.
- The greatest fall of unemployment was brought about by **rearmament**. The armaments industry expanded to build new tanks, battleships, fighter planes and guns. Thousands of jobs were created making these weapons and some businessmen made fortunes from huge government contracts.
- In 1935 Hitler ignored the Treaty of Versailles. He introduced compulsory military service (**conscription**) for all men (18-25 years). The army alone increased by over one million between 1935-38.
- Women, Jews and political opponents of the Nazis were dismissed from their jobs. Many people were sent to concentration camps. None of these were included in official unemployment figures.

Self-sufficiency

- Under Hermann Goering, a **Four Year Plan** was introduced in 1936 to get Germany ready for war.
- Part of the Four Year Plan was to make Germany '**self-sufficient**'. Nazis tried to stop trading with other countries and rely entirely on German resources.
- More coal, oil, iron and other metals were produced and **synthetic** (artificial) raw materials, such as rubber, fuel and textiles were developed. New factories and industrial plants were built.
- By 1939 Germany was not self-sufficient. Over a third of its raw materials were imported.
- Nazis then decided to take over countries with the raw materials and food it needed. This was the policy of **Lebensraum** (living space).

Impact of economic policy on German people

- Farmers**: Hitler cut the taxes farmers had to pay. Hitler guaranteed farmers could not be thrown off their land if they got into debt. Laws were introduced that stopped farmers dividing up their land and giving a part to each of their children. This meant some children were worse off and left the farms to look for industrial work.
- Industrial workers**: Nazis created millions of factory jobs. The demands of rearmament made it important workers were productive and controlled. So the Nazis set up two organisations to manage German workers:
- German Labour Front**: Nazi organisation that replaced trades unions, which were banned. Strikes were also banned. The Front set wages and hours of work. Workers could not bargain for better rights or conditions.
- Strength Through Joy**: This scheme gave workers rewards for their work - evening classes, theatre and cinema trips, picnics, and even cheap holidays abroad and Mediterranean cruises.
- Living standards**: Wages fell and the number of hours worked rose. Serious accidents in factories increased. Workers could be sacked for questioning working conditions.

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Impact of World War II (1939-1945)	
Blitzkrieg 1939-1941	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●First stage of the war was known as '<u>lightning war</u>'. Germany enjoyed military success from September 1939 to June 1941. Germany invaded Poland and gained control of much of western and eastern Europe. ●Food and clothes <u>rationing</u> was introduced, but it was fair and adequate. ●Food and supplies of <u>luxury goods</u>, such as fur coats and perfume, flowed into Germany from conquered land. ●Some <u>bombing raids</u> on German cities, but British planes mainly attacked military targets.
Operation Barbarossa 1941	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●In 1941, <u>Germany invaded Russia</u>. The German war economy was not capable of supplying enough men and weapons for a long war. ●Clothing became scarce and rationed. Food rations decreased as the war went on. ●British planes bombed industrial and residential areas of major German cities. ●There was a shortage of doctors to treat the wounded. ●Younger men were required to join the army to replace those killed; in turn more women were needed in factories. ●Prisoners in concentration camps were used as <u>slave labour</u> for war production.
Total War 1942	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Germany was defeated at <u>Stalingrad</u>, in Russia, in 1943. Over 80,000 Germans died. There were defeats elsewhere too. ●From 1942 <u>everything was entirely focused on making weapons and growing food for soldiers</u>. This was part of the 'total war.' ●A lot of food was unavailable for civilians (not soldiers). ●Heavy bombing of cities caused death and homelessness. Due to bombing, there was no electricity, water or transport. ●More women were needed to work in factories. ●From 1943 Hitler Youth boys manned anti-aircraft guns. A year later boys as young as 15 were sent to fight the Russians.
Defeat 1944	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●By July 1944 it was clear <u>Germany would lose the war</u>. British, American and Canadian troops had landed, in France, on D-Day in June 1944 and fought their way towards Germany. ●Heavy air raids killed thousands. In Dresden on two nights in February 1945 nearly 150,000 people were killed. ●People scavenged for food. The ration system completely broke down. ●As Russian armies advanced in the east, millions of Germans became <u>refugees</u> (people forced to leave their homes).

Racial Policy	
Aryans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Nazis believed some races were superior (better) than others. They believed Germans were the '<u>master race</u>', known as Aryans. ●Ideally an Aryan would be strong, tall, blond, blue-eyed and white. All Aryans were expected to work to make Germany a great nation.
Undesirables/ inferior groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Racial groups who were not pure Aryans and so the Nazis believed they did not belong in Germany. This included Jews and gypsies. ●People who were unable to contribute to making Germany a great nation (e.g. disabled) were also considered 'undesirables.' ●Nazis believed these people needed to be removed to strengthen Germany,
Jews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Nazis believed Jews were to blame for Germany's defeat in World War I. Nazis thought the Jews were an inferior race that should not be allowed to mix with Aryans. ●Jews were persecuted through laws, which separated them from Aryans. ●When war broke out (1939) <u>persecution</u> became more violent. Over six million Jews from all over Europe died in <u>concentration camps</u>.
Physically and mentally disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●About 350,000 disabled men and women were forcibly sterilised by the Nazis. They did not fit in with the Nazis vision of a race of strong Aryans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Nazis wanted to stop them passing on their 'deformities' to their children. ●From 1939, Nazis began to kill them. This is known as euthanasia. About 200,000 people, including 5000 children, were murdered in specially built 'nursing homes.'
Tramps, beggars and alcoholics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●These were regarded as incapable of helping to make Germany a strong nation. From 1933 they were sent to camps.
Christians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Many Christians were sent to camps. ●Some were pacifists (against war) and so refused to join the army. ●Others, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, refused to offer total loyalty to anyone other than God.

WAR AND PERSECUTION (iii)

Persecution of Jews (1933-1939)

1933 Official one-day boycott of Jewish shops and businesses. Members of the SA stood outside shops and physically prevented customers entering. Jewish civil servants, lawyers and teachers were sacked.

1934 Jewish shops were marked with a yellow star of David- a symbol of the Jewish religion- or the word *Juden* (Jew).

1935 Nuremberg Laws removed legal rights from Jews. No longer German citizens, which meant they were not protected by the law.

Marriages between Jews and Aryans were banned. Sexual relations between the two groups outside of marriage were forbidden.

1936 Anti-Jewish slogans were temporarily removed during Olympics.

1938 Jewish doctors, dentists and lawyers were forbidden to treat Aryans. Jewish businesses were forced to close. Jews had to hand over their property to the government.

Jewish children were not allowed to attend state schools.

Kristallnacht In November 1938 a Jew shot dead a Nazi official in Paris. SS began a campaign of terror against Jews, known as *Kristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass). Jewish shops, synagogues and homes were destroyed. Thousands of Jews were arrested and nearly a hundred were killed.

1939 *Kristallnacht* was followed by the mass arrest of Jews; within weeks 30,000 Jews had been sent to concentration camps.

Jews were officially encouraged to emigrate, but not all could afford to. More would have left Germany if other countries had been prepared to accept them.

Persecution of Jews during World War II(1939-1945)

September 1939 German army invaded Poland. On the same day German Jews were subject to a curfew.

When World War II started Nazi persecution of Jews became harsher as the Nazis no longer cared about world opinion.

Nazis experimented with segregated (separated) areas for Jews called ghettos in Polish cities, with Warsaw the largest. Many Jews died from starvation in ghettos. Nazis organised labour camps close to the ghettos.

Special SS units, called the Einsatzgruppen, moved into Poland and Russia behind the German army to round up Jews and Communists. Victims were marched to the outskirts of their villages, forced to dig their own graves and then shot.

January 1942 Nazi leaders met at Wannsee Conference, on the outskirts of Berlin, to discuss the 'Final Solution' for the mass murder of Europe's Jew.

Himmler, head of SS, was put in charge of the 'Final Solution.' Slave labour and death camps were built in Poland, such as Auschwitz-Birkenau. Camps were also set up in Germany and Austria.

By **1943** Jews from all over Europe were sent to camps. The old, the sick and young children were killed immediately. The able-bodied were first used as slave labour.

Six million Jews were sent to camps to be worked to death, gassed or shot. 500,000 gypsies and countless political prisoners, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and Russian and Polish prisoners of war were also killed. These were all victims of the Holocaust (murder on a mass scale).