

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT  
STANDARD 10.8.5**

## *The Holocaust*

**Specific Objective:** Analyze the Nazi policy of pursuing racial purity, especially against the European Jews; its transformation into the Final Solution; and the Holocaust that resulted in the murder of six million Jewish civilians.

### **Nazi Ideology**

The Nazi party believed that people were racially unequal. In their ideology, Germanic peoples, whom they called **Aryans**, were the “master race.” Other peoples were considered inferior—especially Jews. The Nazis believed that other races threatened the “purity” of the Aryan race; they wanted to increase the Aryan race and limit other races.

Nazis’ beliefs about racial inequality had various implications. For example, they used it to justify their drive for *Lebensraum*—“living space,” or room for their own population growth—by invading the eastern European lands of Slavic peoples, whom they deemed inferior. But the most violent Nazi ideology targeted the Jews.

### **Persecution of the Jews**

Soon after Hitler took power in 1933, Jewish persecution began. Under Hitler, Jews were:

- stripped of citizenship and other rights under the **Nuremberg Laws** (1935)
- terrorized by attacks on their homes and businesses, such as *Kristallnacht* (1938)
- deprived of property and forced into **ghettos**—crowded, isolated areas where many died of starvation and disease (1940)

### **The “Final Solution”**

After World War II broke out in 1939, Jewish persecution spread. In Eastern Europe, the Nazis began to send out killing squads. They also built brutal slave-labor camps.

Around 1942, the persecution became a **genocide**—an effort to kill an entire group of people. The Nazis built death camps that served as centers for the mass murder of Jews. Most of the killing took place at six camps in Poland. Hitler called this his “**final solution** to the Jewish question.”

### **The Holocaust**

The persecution and mass murder of European Jews during World War II became known as the **Holocaust**. The word *holocaust* means total destruction. The Nazis killed six million Jews—and five million non-Jews, including many Polish, Romani (Gypsies), and Russians. More than one half of European Jews perished in the Holocaust.