

**What is Antisemitism and Why Does it Matter Today?**

**Lesson Context/Overview:**

Antisemitism is a very important for students to understand before visiting the museum. This lesson is designed to introduce students to the Jewish people, define antisemitism, show historical examples both before and during the Nazi regime and make connections to current day antisemitism.

**Definition of antisemitism:** From the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism) non legally binding definition of antisemitism: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” More simply: antisemitism is prejudice or hatred towards Jews.

**Standards:**

Common Core Standards for Literacy and Writing in History/Social Studies:

* [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10/7/): Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
* [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10/8/): Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
* CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9: Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

Ohio Social Studies Standards:

* Modern World History. CS15. Oppression and discrimination resulted in the Armenian Genocide during World War I and the Holocaust during World War II.

Kentucky Social Studies Standards:

* HS.WH.CE.8: Determine the causes of the World Wars and their global effects between 1900- 1945.
* HS.WH.I.UE.2: Gather information and evidence from credible sources representing a variety of perspectives relevant to compelling/supporting questions in world history.

**Objectives:**

* To define antisemitism
* To provide examples of antisemitism in legislation and propaganda
* To show the impact of antisemitism on the lives of Jews prior to the Holocaust
* To show how antisemitism is still present today

**Materials:**

* What is Antisemitism and Why Does it Matter Today? [Slides presentation](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1If21Y45psWjGUMibl6q-8BE1rCUlxg0u/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109092854046267299714&rtpof=true&sd=true)
* What is Antisemitism and Why Does it Matter Today? [Student Worksheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17P2a4TFHpI5nexQ3rblA06jKPqAqb3Br/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109092854046267299714&rtpof=true&sd=true)
* What is Antisemitism and Why Does it Matter Today? [Pear Deck](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cpVdFFe8-MByP393KyGr_h_fjD-f8ApzIYTt1aGEjpA/edit?usp=sharing)

**Timing:**

* 1-2 class periods. It is designed to be taught in one but may require students to complete the last section at another time.

**Suggested Grade Levels:**

* 9-12

**Lesson Structure:**

This lesson has been created to be delivered in two different ways. First, a worksheet has been created that can be completed by students, either on paper or electronically. Second, the presentation has been turned into a Pear Deck, so students can complete the presentation on that platform.

* This lesson is divided into 4 sections: Introduction to the Jewish People, Introduction to Antisemitism, Antisemitism Station Activity, and Antisemitism Today.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE**

1. Go through the information on the two slides about the Jewish people and Judaism. Point out the pictures to make the point that Jewish people are from around the world. This will be reinforced in the first video.
2. Students will be asked, “What have you learned about the Jewish people?”  
   *More information on Jewish religion, culture, and other information*. [My Jewish Learning](https://www.myjewishlearning.com/).

**INTRODUCTION TO ANTISEMITISM**

1. Why does antisemitism matter to us? Quote from [Deborah Lipstadt](https://www.state.gov/biographies/deborah-lipstadt/), United States Special Envoy to monitor and combat antisemitism, explaining how antisemitism as a warning to all of us.
2. Show the [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9SQrIdlaVE) linked in the Google Slides from Berkley until 7:06. It goes through both the history and current examples, as well as explaining myths about the Jewish people.
3. As students watch the video answer the following questions:

* What is Judaism?
* How did antisemitism begin?
* What is one core tenet of antisemitism? (Multiple will be mentioned)
* What does antisemitism look like? Give ONE example.
* Why does antisemitism matter to all of us?

1. Students now define antisemitism. Encourage the class to participate in creating a class definition, making sure that students understand that this is a hatred of the Jews. The definition used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance is “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” More simply: antisemitism is prejudice or hatred towards Jews. To better understand the issue of antisemitism on democracy watch [Rabbi Lord Sacks](https://www.rabbisacks.org/videos/antisemitism-or-any-hate-become-dangerous-when-three-things-happen/) on 13th September 2018, in the House of Lords debate on antisemitism in Britain.
2. The next slide points out the connection between the Jim Crow laws and the Nuremberg Laws. Make sure that students understand that Jim Crow laws existed for years in the US before the Nazis came to power in Germany. When the Nazis were writing the Nuremberg Laws, the Jim Crow laws were used as references. In fact, the Nuremberg laws did not go as far as many Jim Crow laws. Students will see this connection in the “Power” exhibit at the Holocaust & Humanity Center during their visit.
3. Next, have students watch the [video](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/exploring-hate-how-antisemitism-fuels-white-nationalism) from [Eric Ward](https://www.westernstatescenter.org/eric-k-ward) (the link is on the slide - it is not embedded). This video explains how antisemitism is at the root of white nationalism. He makes connections to present-day connections that students will recognize and understand. Also on this slide is a political cartoon that was released on January 6, 2021. Have students unpack the cartoon, understanding that the author is saying that the Jews and Black Lives Matter were responsible for the attack on the Capitol and that Jews are controlling the Black Lives Matter movement.

**ANTISEMITISM STATION ACTIVITY**

1. Students will look at examples of antisemitism before, during, and after Nazi rule in three areas, and they will answer questions while at each station.

* Laws: Students will be asked to identify 3 ways Jews were targeted BEFORE Nazi rule. They will then be asked to identify 3 ways Jews were targeted DURING Nazi Rule. Then, they will explain the similarities & differences between laws BEFORE and DURING Nazi rule.
* Propaganda:
  + **Examples of PRE-NAZI government propaganda**:  
    What is the message of the images? What creative techniques were used? How might Jewish people and non-Jewish people perceive the messages? *The propaganda examples before Nazi rule are the examples used in the “Origins” section of the Holocaust & Humanity Center.*
  + **Examples of** [**NAZI GOVERNMENT propaganda**](https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-propaganda)**:**  
    What is the message of the images? What creative techniques were used? Then, explain the similarities & differences in propaganda BEFORE Nazi rule and during Nazi rule.
  + Descriptions of examples in PPT:
    - Left: Example of racial antisemitism from 1935. Jews as race defilers.
    - Center: Poster for the antisemitic museum exhibition *Der ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew) characterizes Jews as Marxists, moneylenders, and enslavers. Munich, Germany, November 8, 1937.
    - Right: Nazi propaganda often portrayed Jews as engaged in a conspiracy to provoke war. Here, a stereotyped Jew conspires behind the scenes to control the Allied powers, represented by the British, American, and Soviet flags. The caption reads, "Behind the enemy powers: the Jew." 1942.
  + **Examples of CURRENT-DAY 21ST CENTURY** **propaganda**:

What is the message of the images? What creative techniques were used? How do these images compare to the historic examples on the other slides?

* Holocaust Survivor Testimony: What are examples of antisemitism that happened in the lives of Holocaust survivors before the World War II began?

[Al Miller](https://vimeo.com/749994318/300898de1a) - talking about Nuremberg laws (1935)

[Paul Heiman](https://vimeo.com/368283928/dd5b9b7014) - explains his experiences during Kristallnacht

[Edith Carter](https://www.holocaustandhumanity.org/echoing-voices-edith-carter/) - talks about her experiences from 1923 through 1939, when the Germans invaded Czechoslovakia (watch from 0:00-2:12)

**ANTISEMITISM TODAY**

1. In this section, students look at recent examples of antisemitism in the US and Ohio. There is a link to the [**ADL’s HEAT Map**](https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-to-track-hate/heat-map), some statistics, and examples of antisemitism in Ohio, and pictures of antisemitism in the Cincinnati region (with descriptions of each picture in the Notes portion of the Slides). If you are using Pear Deck for this lesson, please make sure students are given the text in the notes about those pictures.
2. As students look at this information, they should be recording the following:

* **Key Ideas**: What ideas are important to remember? What new terms or concepts have been introduced?
* **Response**: What questions does this information raise for you? Why do you think this information is important and/or relevant? What do you think of these ideas?

1. Finally, students will complete an **Exit Ticket** to wrap up the lesson, putting their answer in their own words:

* What is antisemitism, and why does it matter today?