

By exploring Americans and the Holocaust, students will learn about American responses to Nazism, war, and genocide in the 1930s and 1940s. Individual stories—ranging from government officials to journalists to citizens—highlight

- Students will learn that information about the Nazi threat was available to Americans throughout the time period leading up to and during the Holocaust.
- Students will analyze how contextual factors - economic upheaval, national security concerns, political climate, and racial intolerance - informed American debates and responses to Nazi policies, the refugee crisis, and the war.

Students will learn that Americans at all levels of society responded to Nazi persecution and murder of Jews in a variety of ways, sometimes in the face of risks and challenges.

Students will reflect upon the questions that this history raises about the potential for individual action and America's role in the world.

Before exploring the exhibition, ensure students have a basic understanding of the Holocaust.

- Define the Holocaust with your students before their visit to the exhibition. Use the Museum's [15-minute Definition Activity](#) with your students, if needed. If you have more time, consider the Museum's [Introduction to the Holocaust](#) one-day lesson.

Familiarize yourself with the content of the \_\_\_\_\_ exhibition.

- Visit your local library to view the exhibition.
- Explore the \_\_\_\_\_ [online exhibition](#)

Distribute the [graphic organizer](#) to students. Review [the answer key](#), if needed.

Make any necessary arrangements for the visit to the library.

Access to the \_\_\_\_\_ traveling exhibition at your local library  
[Graphic organizer](#)

1.

By exploring \_\_\_\_\_, students will learn about American responses to Nazism, war, and genocide in the 1930s and 1940s. Individual stories - ranging from government officials to journalists to individual citizens - highlight the variety of choices and actions made by Americans at all levels of society. This lesson promotes reflection and critical thinking about the various factors that shaped American attitudes, the potential for individual action, and America's role in the world during that time and today.

Explain to students that they will be exploring several guiding questions in this lesson. [5 minutes]

What information was available to Americans?

What factors shaped American debates about how to respond?

What actions did the US government or military take?

What actions did American citizens take?

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2.

Instruct students to explore the entire exhibition, examining images, text, and media pieces, in order to respond to the prompt on their graphic organizer.

Divide students into groups or pairs. Each group can be assigned primary responsibility for one of the four graphic organizer prompts. Each prompt requires a list of 3-4 answers. [30 minutes]

3.

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- o [Black Americans and the Nazi Olympics Lesson Plan](#)

Primary source research through local newspapers: [History Unfolded Teacher Guide](#)

- o Engaging students in research related to the [exhibition](#)

[Teaching Materials on the Holocaust](#)

- o [Introduction to the Holocaust One-Day Lesson](#)
- o [Timeline Activity](#)
- o [The Path to Nazi Genocide, 38-minute film and worksheet](#)
- o [History of Antisemitism and the Holocaust Lesson](#)
- o [Teaching with Survivor Testimony Lesson](#)

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Review the

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