

Spring Semester 2020:

Distance Learning Assignments: World

Each week, there will be a reading assignment from your textbook. For each assignment, you will need to read the assigned pages AND:

- 1. Write a 5+ sentence summary in your own words of the material covered in the reading.**
- 2. Include 2 vocabulary definitions from the reading. The definitions should be in your own words.**
- 3. You will need to email me at dalmasc@luhsd.net your summary and vocabulary. (both should be in the same email.) BE SURE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR EMAIL YOUR FULL NAME (First and last) AND Period AND THE TITLE OF THE READING ASSIGNMENT. (for example, US Reading Assignment Week One)**

**You can email throughout each week day (Monday through Friday) 8:15 a.m. - 3:00p.m. if you have any questions.
Email: dalmasc@luhsd.net**

3. The War in Europe, 1942–1945

In late December 1941, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill met in Washington, D.C. Their purpose was to devise a strategy to help the Allies defeat the Axis Powers. They knew they could not afford to fight an offensive war on two fronts—Europe and the Pacific—at the same time. So they decided to concentrate most of their forces on first winning back Europe, while fighting only a defensive war against Japan in the Pacific.

Nazis Invade the Soviet Union and North Africa The Axis powers controlled much of Europe and North Africa at the start of 1942. Great Britain had saved itself, but the Nazis had invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, using Blitzkrieg tactics to overcome Soviet troops massed at the border. One large German force nearly reached Moscow before the onset of winter froze it in its tracks. Another force marched toward the Soviet Union's oil-rich Caucasus region.

Oil played a key role in Axis strategy. Hitler already controlled oil fields in Romania, but he sought more oil to keep his war machine running. He also hoped to cut off Allied oil from the Middle East. But first, he had to secure North Africa by pushing the British out of Egypt. In 1941, Hitler sent the Afrika Korps, a tank-based army division commanded by Erwin Rommel, to bolster the Italian army struggling against the British in North Africa. By June 1942, Rommel's force had taken much of the region and driven deep into Egypt.

Nazis Continue to Persecute the Jews Conquered nations suffered greatly under Nazi rule. Millions of Europeans were forced to work in the German arms industry. The Germans treated Russians, Poles, and other Slavs with special contempt, partly because Hitler claimed that Slavs were subhuman. The Nazis worked them to death and murdered large numbers of them outright. Hitler referred to the Armenian Genocide as a blueprint for the Nazi's persecution of these groups. On the eve of the Nazi's invasion of Poland, Hitler remarked, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

Although many groups were persecuted by the Nazis, no group suffered under Nazi Germany more than Jews. Many Jews tried to flee, but most countries, including the United States, refused to admit more than a token number of refugees. Anti-Semitism had already been prevalent throughout the United States and in Europe. Hitler blamed Germany's economic problems specifically on Jews by drawing on existing anti-Semitism. This anti-Semitism fueled Hitler's obsession with what he considered the "Jewish question"—how to rid Germany of Jews. Using propaganda, he further spread anti-Semitism in order to ostracize and ultimately dehumanize Jews. In Eastern Europe, the Nazis forced Jews into overcrowded ghettos, small sections of cities that could be walled off and guarded. Hundreds of thousands of Jews in these ghettos died from starvation, disease, and exposure to the elements. In just two of the hundreds of Jewish ghettos, more than 112,000 Jews died between 1941 and 1942 alone.

Eventually, Hitler decided on what the Nazis called the "Final Solution"—a plan to systematically murder all Jews in Europe and North Africa. In the Soviet Union, shortly after the invasion in 1941, the Nazis began massacring populations. Between 1941 and 1944, the *Einsatzgruppen*, or Nazi mobile killing squads, worked with local collaborators to forcibly remove and massacre more than 2 million Soviet Jews. In early 1942, the Nazis built the first of six death camps in Poland. Jews, many from ghettos, were sent to these camps by rail, often packed into locked and windowless cattle cars.



The Horror of the Holocaust As American, British, and other Allied troops carried out the invasion of France, the Red Army chased a retreating German force out of the Soviet Union and into Poland. The Nazis frantically tried to hide evidence of their concentration camps in Poland. They cleared out many of the forced-labor camps, marching victims miles without adequate clothing or food westward and shooting any who fell behind. Many also died of hunger, cold, or exhaustion. The Nazis also tried to dismantle some of the death camps, quickly murdering the remaining prisoners. With the Soviet army closing in on Auschwitz, the Nazis forced 60,000 victims, most of whom Jews, to march west into Germany. As many as 15,000 perished during the death march. The survivors ended up in camps such as Buchenwald and Dachau.

Allied forces invading Germany from France discovered concentration camps and were shocked at what they found. Concentration camps such as Buchenwald held thousands of slave laborers, starved to near death. Many of these Holocaust victims, too sick to even eat, died in the weeks after they were liberated. At Dachau, the smell of decomposing bodies led American GIs to 28 railway cars packed with dead bodies. They also uncovered evidence of unethical medical research. Nazi doctors at the camp had carried out inhumane medical experiments on more than 7,000 victims.

The Nazis committed crimes so reprehensible that no word existed to describe them. In 1944, a Polish Jewish lawyer named Raphael Lemkin coined the term *genocide* to refer to the systematic killing of a racial, ethnic, religious, political, or cultural group.

The Nazis murdered 6 million Jews, one-third of the world's Jewish population. An existing word that means "sacrifice by fire"—*holocaust*—was capitalized to give a name to this terrible slaughter. The **Holocaust** was the systematic, state-sponsored, persecution and murder of Jews by the Nazis. The Nazis also murdered Roma peoples, Serbs, Polish intellectuals, resistance fighters from all the nations, German opponents of Nazism, gay men, Jehovah's Witnesses, disabled people, habitual criminals, political activists, and the poor.



One GI described the recently freed inmates of Dachau: "Many of them were Jews. They were wearing black and white striped prison suits and round caps. A few had shredded blanket rags draped over their shoulders . . . The prisoners struggled to their feet [and] shuffled weakly out of the compound. They were like skeletons—all skin and bones."

Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, Jewish author, and Nobel Prize for Peace winner, was subjected to the horrors of the Holocaust. He was 15 when he and his family were deported from Romania and taken to Auschwitz. His mother and younger sister were murdered there. Wiesel and his father were later taken to Buchenwald, where his father perished. *Night* is Wiesel's memoir of this time in these camps. In the following excerpt, Wiesel, now deceased, begins to describe his first night at Auschwitz:

NEVER SHALL I FORGET that night, the first night in camp, that turned my life into one long night seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky. Never shall I forget those flames that consumed my faith forever. Never shall I forget the nocturnal silence that deprived me for all eternity of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes. Never shall I forget those things, even were I condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

The War in Europe Ends When the Allies crossed from France into Germany, they met fierce resistance. By December 1944, their offensive had stalled. Hitler made plans to burst through the Allied lines in the wooded Ardennes region of Belgium, where the American forces were weakest. He launched his counteroffensive on December 16. Eight German armored divisions smashed into the surprised Americans, creating a huge bulge in the American line. Allied air support and quick action by General George Patton's Third Army forced the Germans to withdraw by mid-January. The Battle of the Bulge was the last German offensive on the western front.

By April 1945, the Red Army had fought its way through Poland and into Germany, to the outskirts of Berlin. On April 30, with advancing Soviet soldiers just half a mile from his Berlin bunker, Hitler killed himself. German forces quickly began surrendering. On May 8—Victory in Europe Day, or V-E Day—the war in Europe officially ended.



0073447 CONCENTRATION CAMP
Credit: Albritton-Holt / The Granger Collection, New York

This photo shows the barracks inside the Buchenwald concentration camp after the liberation of the camp by the Allies in 1945. Victims at the German concentration camps, including Elie Wiesel (in the second row of bunks, seventh person from the left), performed slave labor in terrible conditions, and one-quarter of the people died there, many starving to death.