

**AP European History  
Dictatorship and the Second World War  
Re-Designed Lesson Plan**

**Lesson: Holocaust Responsibility**

**Objective:**

Students will consider the level of responsibility for the Holocaust by various stakeholders in European society during World War II.

**AP European History Course Concepts:**

4.1.3.D: Fueled by racism and anti-Semitism, Nazi Germany – with the cooperation of some of the other Axis powers and collaborationist governments – sought to establish a “new racial order” in Europe, which culminated with the Holocaust.

**Essential Questions:**

1. **Who were the perpetrators of the Holocaust, and to whom should we place responsibility?**

**Materials:**

- Holocaust Responsibility Worksheet
- Background Readings
- Model DBQ from College Board

**Overview:**

**1. Pre-lesson activities:** Students watched the documentary “Night & Fog” and completed the following readings independently:

- McKay, Edrene: *WAS THE HOLOCAUST THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NAZIS OR GERMAN SOCIETY AS A WHOLE?*
- Holocaust Notes

**1. Activator** – Students will complete a brief written reflection analyzing the following prompt:  
“The road to Auschwitz was built by hate, but paved with indifference”  
– Sir Ian Kershaw

After a few minutes, students will engage in a brief class discussion of their reflections on this prompt.

**2. Activity:** Students will use the Holocaust Responsibility Handout to assess the degree of responsibility for various stakeholders during the time period. After completing the sheet, students will participate in a whole-group discussion of key stakeholders. Following the discussion, students will read “I Loved My Grandmother. But She Was a Nazi.” by Jessica Shattuck and ponder how this personal remembrance connects to the larger picture of Holocaust remembrance efforts.

**3. Closing:** After completing the discussion, students will be assigned a take-home DBQ on the Holocaust that assesses student understanding of the essential question and AP course concept, as well as reinforcing the DBQ writing skills in preparation for next month’s exam.

**Assessment:**

Students will be assessed on their understanding informally through guided class discussion. Students will be formally assessed on their understanding through the completion of the DBQ. The DBQ will be graded using the College Board DBQ rubric.