

Holocaust/WWII Glossary

- **Allies:** The nations united against the Axis Powers during WWII led by the United States, Great Britain, and Russia.
- **Anti-Semitism:** Irrational hatred against the Jews, often characterized by discrimination, persecution, and violence.
- **Auschwitz-Birkenau:** The largest of the Nazi concentration camps, located in southwestern Poland. More than 1.5 million Jews were murdered there.
- **Axis Powers:** The three countries fighting the Allies in WWII: Germany, Italy, and Japan.
- **Bergen-Belsen:** A concentration camp in northern Germany. Epidemics, overcrowding, and planned starvation led to the deaths of over 35,000 people. Anne and Margot Frank died here.
- **Concentration Camps:** Prison camps that held Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, Poles, political and religious opponents, and other labeled enemies of the state. People died of starvation, slave labor, and disease.
- **Crematory:** A building with a furnace for burning dead bodies; used by Nazis from cremating the remains of death camp prisoners.
- **"Final Solution":** Nazi program to destroy all European Jews.
- **Genocide:** Intentional, systematic murder of an entire political, cultural, racial, or religious group.
- **Gestapo:** The secret police force of the German Nazi state; a branch of the SS that dealt harshly with all opponents by using terrorism.
- **Holocaust:** A great or total destruction of life. The term is often used to refer to the destruction of some six million Jews by the Nazis and their followers in Europe between 1933 - 1945.

- **Kristallnacht:** Also known as "Night of the Broken Glass;" a mass riot unleashed by the Nazis against Jews and Jewish institutions in Germany and Austria on November 9th and 10th of 1938.
- **Nazi Party:** The group that governed Germany under Hitler's rule. "Nazi" is the abbreviation for National Socialist Germany Worker's Party.
- **Pogrom:** Organized violence against Jews, usually supported by the German government. Kristallnacht was an example of a pogrom.
- **SS:** Abbreviation for Schutzstaffel, the protective units first organized as Hitler's personal body guards. The SS was later responsible for carrying out the destruction at the concentration camps.
- **Swastika:** An ancient religious symbol (a hooked cross) that became the official symbol of the Nazi Party. It is now banned in Germany.
- **Treaty of Versailles:** A treaty signed at the end of WWI that took away considerable German territory and forced Germany to pay reparations to the Allies. It also blamed Germany for starting WWI and stated that Germany was never to form another army.
- **Yellow Star:** The six-pointed Star of David; a Jewish symbol that the Nazis forced the Jews above the age of six to wear as a mark of shame and to make the Jews visible.