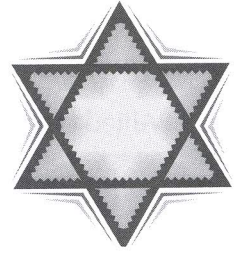


World War II started in 1939 when Germany attacked Poland, and continued until 1945 when Germany and Japan surrendered. Many of the battles had been fought in Europe, and the countries were devastated by terrible destruction and loss of life once again.

## The Holocaust

Beginning in the 1930s, Adolf Hitler tried to get rid of all the Jews in Europe. Jews had been disliked and persecuted in Germany for hundreds of years. He believed that his Aryan race was superior to any other race. First, he hurt the Jews economically by ordering Germans not to shop in stores owned by Jews. Then, his army made them leave their homes and move into crowded areas called ghettos. The Jews were forced to work as slaves. Finally, Jews were forced into concentration camps or death camps where they were murdered by breathing poison gas.



As Allied troops moved across Europe after Germany's surrender, they came across some horrible sights. The troops found the camps where Jews had been imprisoned and killed by Adolf Hitler and his Nazi troops. Hitler was responsible for the murder of more than six million Jews between 1933 and 1945. This terrible period of history is known as the **Holocaust**.

After the war, many Holocaust survivors were afraid to go back to their former homes and many countries restricted where they could go. Finally, when the State of Israel was established in 1948, thousands of Jewish people flooded into their new homeland.



### Reading Activity

A young German-Jewish girl named Anne Frank wrote a diary during the two years she and her family spent hiding from the Nazis during World War II. Read the excerpt from her diary below and answer the questions.

"Fine specimens of humanity, those Germans, and to think I'm actually one of them! No, that's not true, Hitler took away our nationality long ago. And besides, there are no greater enemies on earth than the Germans and Jews." October 9, 1942

1. Why does Anne dislike the Germans even though she is German herself? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What does Anne mean when she says that Hitler "took away our nationality long ago"? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What do you think it would be like to hide and never leave your home for two years? What would you miss? \_\_\_\_\_