



HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
DAY TRUST

**Holocaust Memorial Day**

# The Holocaust



This picture shows terrified Jewish people in the Warsaw Ghetto, and Nazi guards with guns.

**The Holocaust** was the attempt by the Nazis and their collaborators to murder all the Jews in Europe. Six million Jewish men, women and children were killed in ghettos, mass-shootings, concentration camps and extermination camps.

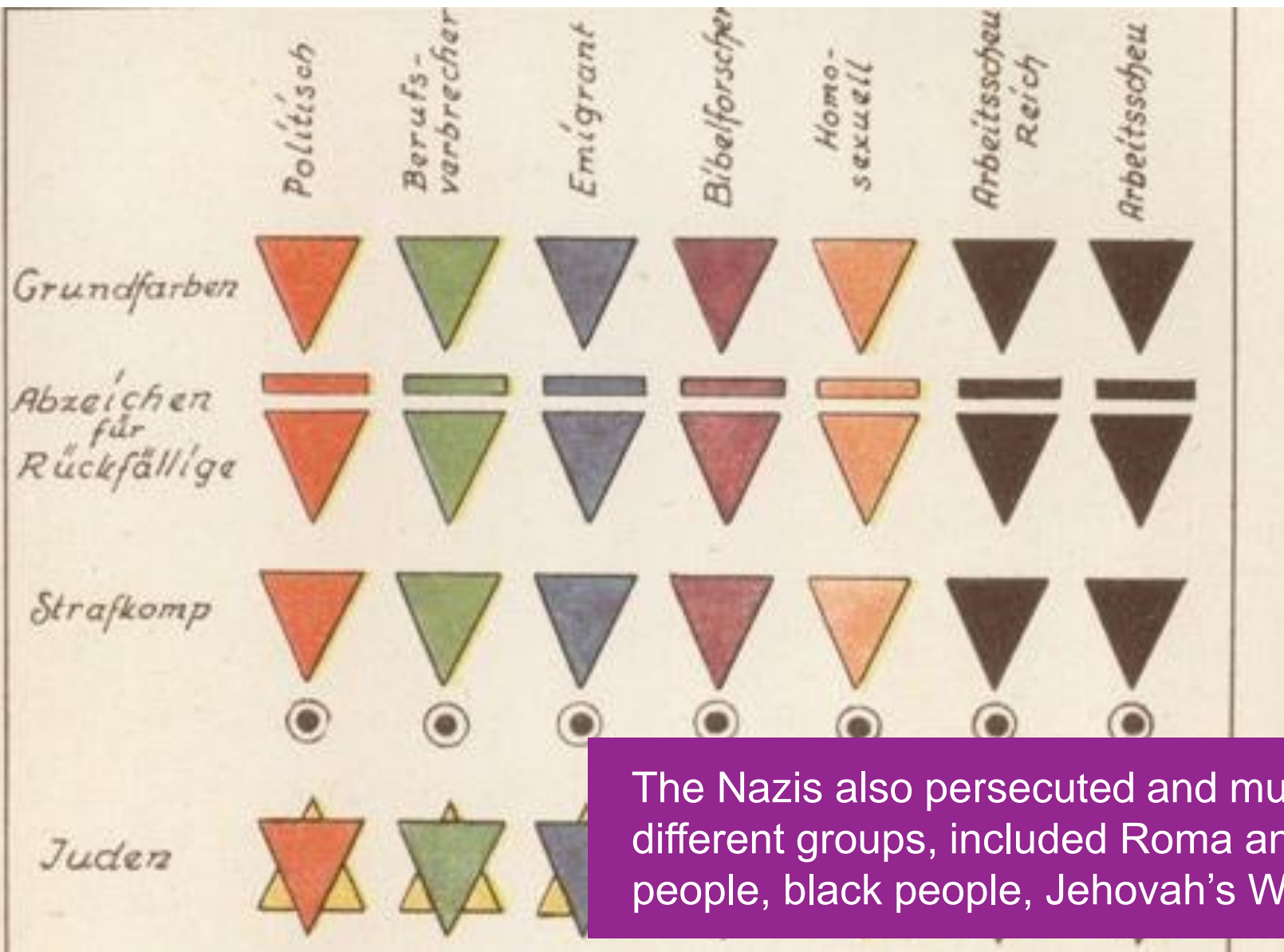
# Why 27 January?

Auschwitz-Birkenau – Nazi death camp



27 January 1945 – Auschwitz-Birkenau was liberated.

# Nazi Persecution



Different groups of people were given different coloured badges in concentration camps

The Nazis also persecuted and murdered people from a range of different groups, included Roma and Sinti people ('gypsies'), gay people, black people, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents.

# Genocides around the world



Cambodia, 1975 - 1979



Rwanda, 1994



Bosnia, 1995



Darfur, 2003 - present



Who caused  
the  
Holocaust?

# Who caused the Holocaust?

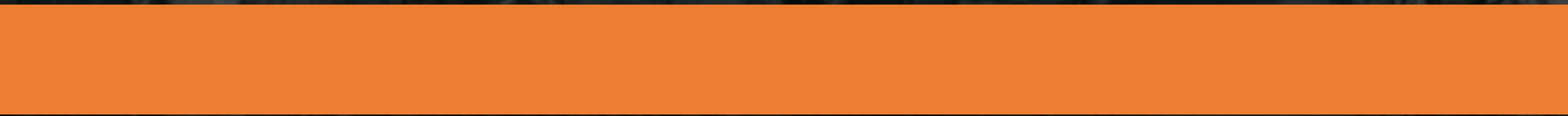
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- 94% mentioned Hitler.
- 50% said Hitler was alone responsible.
  
- Only 3.9% of students referenced 'Germans' or the 'German people' as holding any responsibility





This years theme is  
Ordinary people





# So who were the ordinary people involved?

- perpetrators – people actively involved
- bystanders – people who watched and allowed it to happen
- Rescuers – those who tried to help



# Perpetrators



- When we think of those involved in carrying out the holocaust it makes it easier to think they were monsters.
- But what if they were not? What if they were everyday people like me and you?



# Perpetrators

Railway workers, who looked so ordinary, were indeed ordinary people from all across Nazi-occupied Europe, working as train drivers, conductors, signal men. Some of these ordinary people would drive thousands of Jews to concentration camps all over Eastern Europe.



Ordinary people were

- policemen involved in rounding up victims,
- secretaries typing the records of genocide,
- dentists and doctors carrying out selections,
- ordinary people were young children informing the SS on neighbours, who they thought had Jewish heritage.
- or even ordinary people buying Jewish belongings cheaply after they were removed from their homes.

# Bystanders

Most people living under a murderous regime don't take an active role in a genocide. They do not become perpetrators or rescuers. They let the genocide take place around them, and they take no action to contribute to it, yet neither do they take action to challenge it, prevent it or to stop it happening.



# Rescuers

Rescuers are also often portrayed as extraordinary, or superhuman, with amazing bravery and skill. This may be true in some instances, but many rescuers describe themselves in very simple terms, highlighting the circumstances that enabled them to save others. Sometimes they were able to provide food to others who needed it, sometimes they hid people. Ordinary people who did extraordinary things, risking their lives, their livelihoods, their families to help others.

[Sir Nicholas Winton](#), a young stockbroker, rescued 669 children from Czechoslovakia, bringing them to the UK thereby sparing them from the horrors of the Holocaust.

He said:

*Why are you making such a big deal out of it? I just helped a little; I was in the right place at the right time.*



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Whilst the theme for HMD 2023 focuses on ordinary people, this can be extended to include ordinary locations, or sites. Genocide is an act out of the ordinary that disturbs the natural order of things, hijacking ordinary places and their original purpose. During genocides, people turn these ordinary locations into sites that facilitate genocide. Schools, hospitals, old age homes, religious buildings, forests and fields have been used and misappropriated as holding camps, detention sites, and even as sites of murder throughout all genocides.



**Your voice is amazing**

**Your voice is amazing.  
Use it.**