

Kristallnacht

Lesson Plan (65 minutes)

Step 1: Lesson goals

Goals:

Affective: Students will be able to articulate why Kristallnacht was a turning point in the history of the Holocaust, and will appreciate how this message is relevant today.

Behavioral: Students will be able to design an appropriate commemoration event for Kristallnacht that encompasses its historical significance and its modern relevance.

Cognitive:

- Students will be able to describe the boiling frog analogy and explain how it connects to the rise of Nazism
- Students will be able to list three events that led to Kristallnacht

Essential Questions/Big Ideas:

1. What was the starting point of the Holocaust?
2. How did the Nazis get away with genocide?
3. What is the value in commemorating past tragedies?

1. The path leading up to the Holocaust was long and calculated.
2. Humans can come to accept moral atrocities when they are introduced slowly and incrementally.
3. Commemorating Kristallnacht is a step towards preventing genocide in the future

Step 2: Learning Plan

Hook/Trigger: (5 min)

Ask students to answer this question without using a date: When did the Holocaust begin? Have them write their answers on the board or on a piece of chart paper. Then, discuss why they chose those specific dates.

Learning Activity: (50 minutes)

1. **Video and review questions (20 minutes).** Watch the [video](#) “Kristallnacht” and play the [Kahoot](#) game to review.

2. **Discussion (10 minutes):** *Discuss the following prompt in small groups or as a class:*

Current events: Kristallnacht represents a turning point in the Nazi persecution of European Jews. The October 7, 2023 massacre in Israel is another tragic example of antisemitism that will change the way the world relates to Israel and the Jewish people in ways yet unseen. In what ways has the world’s attitude towards antisemitism changed since 1938? In what ways has it stayed the same? What lessons can we learn from Kristallnacht that may be applicable to the current events and the state of antisemitism worldwide?

3. **Learning activity (20 minutes):**

Design a commemoration event: You have been asked to be part of a school committee that is organizing a commemorative event for Kristallnacht.

Working by yourself or in a small group, design a proposal that outlines the program you are planning, your goals for the event, and any support that you will need from your school. As you draft your proposal, consider the following:

- What is Kristallnacht and why is your school commemorating it?
- Who will be in attendance? How will you engage your audience?
- What are the goals of your event? What do you want your audience to learn, do, and feel as a result of this experience?
- What messages do you want your audience to take from this event that are applicable to their lives today?
- What physical space and other items will you need in order to make your event successful?

Reflection: (5 minutes)

Have students respond to the following prompt in a small group discussion or as a journal entry:

Connecting: Learning about the events that led to the Holocaust can evoke strong emotions. What emotions did you experience while learning about Kristallnacht and the events that preceded it? Was there a specific story or image that triggered these emotions? What helps to ground you when you learn about difficult things (for example, talking with a trusted adult, journaling, etc...)?

Step 3: Assessment

Checking for Understanding: (5 minutes)

3-2-1:

- What are three things you learned about Kristallnacht and the rise of Nazism that you didn't know before?
- What are two lessons or messages regarding Kristallnacht that you find to be relevant today?
- What is one thing that you would like to learn more about?