

Anne Frank: Nuremberg Laws

Summary

Students will research and discuss the Nuremberg Laws and their effect on the Jews during the Third Reich.

Intended Learning Outcomes

To understand the concept of citizenship.

To examine the structure of laws and how they affect a person's life.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material from 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 - 1945 Teacher Workbook.'

As part of the introduction, ask students the following questions:

What does it mean to be a citizen of a country?

How does one become a citizen?

What is the difference between a citizen and a noncitizen (subject)?

Introductory Activity:

Have students draw a circle, divided into six or eight sections. In the center should be the student's name. Each section should then be filled in with a different area of importance to the student.

Examples are: my pet, hiking, girl or boy scouts, my church or synagogue, school and, my best friend.

After the students have completed their circle, discuss which areas would have been denied to them because of who they were. The Nuremberg Laws resulted in the eventual loss of identity of each victim by systematic denial.

Jews could not own pets or bicycles. They also had a strict curfew to obey. Nazi Youth was the only youth organization allowed. Synagogues were destroyed during Kristallnacht and finally many friendships between Jews and non-Jews were torn apart (often from fear of being associated with Jews). Friendships were also destroyed between those Christians who supported and did not support the Nazi regime. Reference the Nuremberg Laws for more restrictions. The Nuremberg laws were passed on September 15, 1935. Nazi Germany instituted a series of laws designed to make freedom increasingly difficult for the Jews and to restrict their freedom. Excerpts follow:

'Reich Citizenship Law: A Reich citizen is a subject of the state who is German or related blood, who proves by his conduct that he is willing and fit to serve the German people and Reich. A Reich citizen is the sole bearer of all political rights.'

Questions:

What kind of conduct would prove that one is willing and fit to serve the German people and Reich?

What types of tests could you develop to show these qualities?

Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor (9-15-35)

Moved by the understanding that purity of the German Blood is the essential condition for the continued existence of the German people:

Marriages between Jews and subjects of the state of Germany or related bloods is forbidden.

Marriages nevertheless concluded are invalid, even if concluded abroad to circumvent this law'.

Extramarital intercourse between Jews and those of Germany or related blood is forbidden.

Jews may not employ in their households female subjects of German or related blood who are under 45 years old.

Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich or National flag or to display the Reich colors. They are, on the other hand, permitted to display the Jewish colors.

Questions:

Does the title of the Law give you any hints as to the purpose of the Law?

To the attitudes feelings of those in power?

Why would Jews not be allowed to hire female household employees under 45 years old?

Why would Jews not be allowed to fly the German flag?

How do you think that would affect them (would it bother them)?

Why do you think Jews would be allowed to fly the Jewish colors?

Would you marry someone if the Law prohibited it (Even if the punishment were a prison sentence with hard labor)? Explain.

Ask students to list ten things they personally enjoy doing in their daily lives. Have students pick five things they could give up if they had to.

Why did they pick those five?

How would they feel if they could no longer do those activities?

Read the June 26, 1942 excerpt from 'The Diary of Anne Frank.'

Have students make a list of 12-15 specific restrictions on Jews.

What was the purpose for these restrictions?

Why do you think Jews were made to wear the yellow star?

In Anne's diary, she quotes Jopie. 'You're scared to do anything, because it may be forbidden.'

What do you think she means by this?

How would it feel to be in this type of situation?

Have you ever been in this type of situation? Explain.

Why do you think Anne could say things were still bearable?

Nazi Germany continued to pass laws that discriminated against Jews.

Regulation for the Elimination of the Jews from the Economic Life of Germany (11-12-38) Jews are forbidden to operate retail stores, mail order houses or sales agencies, or to practice a craft. They cannot offer for sale goods or services, to advertise these or to accept orders at markets, fairs and exhibitions of all sorts.

Jews are forbidden to ride streetcars, go to the theater, play sports, go to the parks, practice medicine, law, farming, and can only walk on certain streets. Jews must shop only at certain stores during certain hours, and Jewish children can attend Jewish schools only.

In addition to the above laws, in 1939, Jews were ordered to turn in their radio sets. They were forbidden to leave their homes except for a few hours each day. Jews were forced to deposit all their money in banks, then forbidden to take their money out. The money was confiscated by the Nazis. Telephones were taken away. By 1942, Jews could not have pets, could not attend school of any kind, and had to give up extra clothing.

Questions:

What things do you notice about the progression of the laws from the passing of the Nuremberg laws until 1942? (continually got stricter, more repressive, more confining)

What was the purpose of these laws?

Which possessions/freedoms would be hardest to give up? Why?

Which would you miss the least?

Why would Jews be forced to turn in their radios?

Imagine you are a Jew living in Nazi Germany during the 1930's. What signs could you have seen of the Holocaust coming?

First Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law (11-14-35)

A Jew cannot be a Reich citizen. He has no voting rights in political matters. He cannot occupy a public office.

A Jew is a person descended from at least three grandparents who are full Jews.

A Mischling is considered a Jew if he is descended from two full Jewish grandparents; who was a member of the Jewish Religious Community; who was married to a Jew; who was born from a

lineage with a Jew or as the result of extramarital intercourse with a Jew.

Questions:

How is a Jew defined?

What do you think is the purpose of this law?

Why do you think Hitler felt it necessary to define Jew?

Why do you think Hitler felt the need to further clarify the Reich Citizenship Law only two months after its passage?

Do you think this new law may have defined some people as Jewish who had not previously thought of themselves as Jewish?

How would that affect them?

Second Regulation for the Implementation of the Law Regarding the Changing of Family Names and Given Names (8-17-38)

Insofar as Jews have given names other than those to which they are permitted to bear they are required to take an additional given name: males will take the given name Israel, females the given name Sara.

There was a separate list of names that Jews were required to use.

Questions:

Why do you think Jews would be forced to assume the name Israel or Sara?

Would you like to be forced to use a name other than the one your parents had given to you or that you were used to being called?

How would you feel about having to choose your child's name from an approved list?

Discussion Questions:

Why were these Laws passed?

Why do you think there was little opposition to them?

If you were a Jew living in Nazi Germany, how do you think you would have felt? What emotions do you think you would have?

If you were a non-Jew living during this period, how do you think you would have felt? What emotions would you have?

Do you think non-Jewish citizens approved or agreed with these discriminatory decrees?

Explain

Which laws would you find objectionable? Would it make a difference if they applied personally to you? Explain.

Should governments ever pass laws that violate individual rights? Can you give examples?

What action could you take if a law was passed that you did not like? Teachers might also discuss how the laws and social atmosphere of the period might affect one's self image and how it might reinforce or develop stereotypes.

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