

# THE NAZI OLYMPICS Berlin 1936 in History

## Teacher Instructions

As students tour the exhibition they should focus on the following question and complete the attached worksheet.

### Focus Question

**The Nazis saw the Olympics as an opportunity to showcase German superiority and to spread their propaganda. Was the Olympics also an opportunity for others in the world?**

#### **Enhancement Activities for classroom use:**

1. Analyze the [Pre-1933 Nazi Posters](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/posters1.htm) (<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/posters1.htm>) and the [Nazi Posters, 1933-1945](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/posters2.htm) (<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/posters2.htm>) from the German Propaganda Archive. Based on your observations of these posters and your understanding of stereotypes, what can you determine about the type of society the Nazis were attempting to form? Who was allowed to be a part of the new society and who was outside? How is each group represented visually?
2. Analyze the Nuremberg Laws. What were the objectives of the Nazis' legal assault on the German Jews? What effects did this have on the German Jewish community? What made this assault racially-based as opposed to religiously-based? (<http://www.mchekc.org/PDF%20Files/Documents%20for%20Educators/Nuremberg%20Laws.pdf>)
3. Discuss as a class which events depicted in the exhibit afforded the world a chance to protest Nazi policy or to intervene in Nazi politics. Potential topics include but are not limited to the Nazi occupation of the Rhineland, boycotting the Olympics.
4. Analyze how the Nazi Nuremberg Laws and the American Jim Crow Laws are similar. How are they different?

# THE NAZI OLYMPICS Berlin 1936 in History

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** As you tour THE NAZI OLYMPICS Berlin 1936. Answer the following questions based on the information you find in each of the five sections of the exhibit.

## **Section I: Nazi Germany, 1933-1936**

What do the signs “Jews only” remind you of from United States history? How are they similar and how are they different from American Jim Crow laws?

What about the Nazi approach to antisemitism makes it racism and not religious persecution? List at least two specific examples from the exhibit to support your answer.

1.

2.

## **Section II: Nazification of German Sport**

Hitler held the Olympics in low regard because of their international character. Why?

How did the Nazis use sports to further their political agenda? List at least two specific examples from the exhibit:

1.

2.

## **Section III: The Boycott Debate**

Detail the argument of each of the following groups with regard to the potential U.S. boycott of the Olympics. Did the group favor a boycott? Why or why not?

American Olympic Committee –

African-American Athletes and press –

Jewish Americans -

#### **Section IV: Nazi Olympics**

The Nazis created a “façade of hospitality” in Berlin by “cleaning up” the area. Describe at least 3 steps the Nazis took to mask their racist politics during the Games.

1.

2.

3.

#### **Section V: Aftermath**

Based on what you have learned about 1930s Nazi Germany throughout this exhibit, what factors came together to make it possible for the Nazis to even attempt the genocide of the Jews of Europe?

**Focus Question:** The Nazis saw the Olympics as an opportunity to showcase German superiority and to spread their propaganda. As a propaganda tool, it was a great success. Was the Olympics also an opportunity for others in the world? Describe at least 2 responses from others in the world and whether or not they were successful in using the Olympics to accomplish their goals?

1.

2.

# THE NAZI OLYMPICS Berlin 1936 in History

Name: **KEY**

**Directions:** As you tour THE NAZI OLYMPICS Berlin 1936. Answer the following questions based on the information you find in each of the five sections of the exhibit.

## Section I: Nazi Germany, 1933-1936

What do the signs “Jews only” remind you of from United States history? How are they similar and how are they different from American Jim Crow laws?

Similar to the signs in the southern U.S. which say Whites or Blacks only. They are similar to the signs in America in that they segregate the minority population (the Jews). They are dissimilar in that the signs in Germany are federally mandated and represent a national policy.

What about the Nazi approach to antisemitism makes it racism and not religious persecution? List at least two specific examples from the exhibit to support your answer.

Answers may include but are not limited to:

1. Nuremberg Laws chart detailing *Mischlinge* status ties Judaism to biology and genetics instead of religious observance.
2. Humiliation signs worn by German non-Jewish woman married to German-Jewish man intend to limit sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews thereby preventing Jewish offspring.
3. “Aryan” school boy being compared to racial chart in school

## Section II: Nazification of German Sport

Hitler held the Olympics in low regard because of their international character. Why?

Hitler was a strong nationalist who believed that the “Aryan” race would one day dominate the world. He originally saw the Olympics as a festival “organized by the Jews” that would showcase “lesser” peoples including those the Nazis were persecuting in Germany.

How did the Nazis use sports to further their political agenda? List at least two specific examples from the exhibit:

Answers may include but are not limited to:

1. utilized sports and physical fitness training as a military training tool
2. believed girls and women needed to be physically fit to be good German mothers
3. barred Jewish athletes from competing or training in facilities and clubs
4. create a sense of German unity and nationalism

## Section III: The Boycott Debate

Detail the argument of each of the following groups with regard to the potential U.S. boycott of the Olympics. Did the group favor a boycott? Why or why not?

American Olympic Committee –

Against the boycott on the theory that sports should not be tied up in politics. Stated that participation in the Games was not an endorsement of the Nazi government or its policies.

African-American Athletes and press –

Against boycott on theory that the success of African-American athletes would diminish Nazi claims of racial superiority and that American hypocrisy with regard to Jim Crow laws and segregation could be addressed.

Jewish Americans -

Favored a boycott as part of a larger boycott of German goods because of their antisemitic policies.

#### **Section IV: Nazi Olympics**

The Nazis created a “façade of hospitality” in Berlin by “cleaning up” the area. Describe at least 3 steps the Nazis took to mask their racist politics during the Games.

Answers may include but are not limited to:

1. removed segregation signs tied to Nuremberg Laws
2. rounded up and interned Roma and Sinti (Gypsies)
3. censorship of the press

#### **Section V: Aftermath**

Based on what you have learned about 1930s Nazi Germany throughout this exhibit, what factors came together to make it possible for the Nazis to even attempt the genocide of the Jews of Europe?

Answers may include but are not limited to:

- successfully marginalizing German Jews through the Nuremberg and other laws
- the failure of the international community to protest German policies or military advances such as the occupation of the Rhineland or to boycott the Olympics

**Focus Question:** The Nazis saw the Olympics as an opportunity to showcase German superiority and to spread their propaganda. As a propaganda tool, it was a great success. Was the Olympics also an opportunity for others in the world? Describe at least 2 responses from others in the world and whether or not they were successful in using the Olympics to accomplish their goals?

Answers may include but are not limited to:

1. Failure of international community to protest
2. African-American successes at the Games did little to change their status in America or to address antisemitism and racism in Nazi Germany