

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Holocaust

The word “holocaust” is commonly applied to any extensive human disaster. When capitalized, “Holocaust” is recognized as the massacre of Jews by the Nazis during WWII. Adolph Hitler believed that there should be only one pure race of German people and that Jews were inferior to this race. He ordered that all Jews should be annihilated. As a result, between 1939 and 1945 the Nazis systematically killed six million Jewish people.

Read the brief history of the Holocaust below. Use the space provided to do a freewrite on your thoughts. Share your ideas with your class.

Between 1933 and 1939, the Nazis gradually took away the business rights of the Jews. Jews were no longer allowed to own stores, and they could not receive any profits. This made it impossible for a family to survive. Financial upheaval was the first step of the Nazis’ master plan.

When WWII started in 1939, the Nazis began to round up the Jews and place them into containment camps called ghettos. The Jews were forced to wear yellow stars, and they had few freedoms. In the ghettos, food was scarce and conditions were crowded, but families could stay together and some people were able to work. At this time, in an attempt to avoid imprisonment, many Jews fled the country or went into hiding. By 1942, the concentration camps, or death camps, were established. Jews were stripped of all belongings and were loaded into boxcars. The trains transported them to concentration camps located throughout Germany and Poland. In the concentration camps, the Nazis dehumanized and murdered millions of innocent men, women, and children.

Today, there are still reminders of the horrors of the Holocaust. Survivors still wear the numbers tattooed on their arms in the camps, and although the concentration camps were destroyed, the foundations of many of the buildings still exist.

## Freewrite Response: