

ACTIVITY!

Inquire & Investigate

VOCAB LAB 

Write down what you think each word means:

diplomat, democracy, humane, isolationist, systematic, persecution, Nazi, genocide, and anti-Semitism.

Compare your definitions with those of your friends or classmates. Did you all come up with the same meanings? Turn to the text and glossary if you need help.

USE ART TO SHOW LIFE AND DEATH DURING THE HOLOCAUST

During the Holocaust, people created art while living in ghettos, concentration camps, or while in hiding. These pieces of art documented life in these places and showed events from the artist's perspective. Created by professional artists and everyday people, these works of art provide a lasting snapshot of life and death during Hitler's rise to power.

- You can examine some art created during the Holocaust at these websites.

 inmate art Birkenau and Auschwitz concentration camps



 Holocaust ghetto artists



 Fernand Horn Van Horen



 a Holocaust art exhibit Illinois



- After studying these paintings and drawings, what did you learn about life in the concentration camps and the experiences of the artists?
 - How did the artist use their art to express emotions?
 - How did they use color (or lack of color) in the art?
 - What themes or symbols did you notice?

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• **Even though you did not personally live through the Holocaust, you can still connect emotionally to the subject.** Using what you have learned about the Holocaust and the experience of those in the Jewish ghettos and concentration camps, create a piece of art to document life and death during this time. When creating your art, consider the following:

- What form of art will you create?
- Will your art be literal and illustrative or more abstract and impressionist?
- What themes will you use in your art? Some examples include hope, fear, longing, despair, loss of childhood, and life before the Holocaust.
- Will you use symbols in your art? What will they represent?

To investigate more, consider the artist Charlotte Salomon, a Jewish artist from Berlin, Germany. She painted a collection of autobiographical works known as "Life? Or Theater?" Between 1940 and 1942, she created 1,325 watercolors. About 800 of these paintings were included in "Life? Or Theater?" Salomon was murdered at Auschwitz in 1943. More people died at Auschwitz than any other concentration camp. You can learn more about Charlotte's life and explore how she used art to document life during the Holocaust at this website.

 Charlotte Salomon



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WHAT IS GENOCIDE?

Before 1944, the word *genocide* did not exist. In 1944, a Jewish lawyer from Poland named Raphael Lemkin wanted a way to describe the Nazi policies of systematic murder. He combined *geno* from the Greek word meaning "race" or "tribe" with *cide*, from a Latin word meaning "killing." Today, the word *genocide* refers to violent crimes committed against a group with the intention to destroy the group and its existence.