Making an Enemy

How the Nazi regime built on older antisemitism

SS24.HOS.2b "Analyze how the Nazi regime utilized and built on historical antisemitism to cast the Jewish people as a common enemy.*"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline an older prejudice, circle a false claim the Nazis added, and number two ways the regime spread or enforced these ideas.

From Prejudice to Policy

1. In April 1933, Nazi activists stood outside Jewish-owned shops in Germany and urged customers to stay away. The boycott was part of a larger campaign to turn neighbors against Jewish people. Its message did not begin from nothing. For centuries, some European Christians had falsely blamed Jews for the death of Jesus, and rulers had restricted where Jews could live or work. Because many jobs were closed to them, some Jews worked as moneylenders. Hostile claims then portrayed Jews as greedy.

2. Nazi leaders reused older lies about Jewish greed but changed their explanation. They claimed Jews were a separate, dangerous "race," not simply followers of a religion. This false racial idea treated even Jews who had converted to Christianity as enemies. Nazi newspapers and school lessons spread these claims, while propaganda blamed Jews for Germany's defeat in World War I and for economic hardship. Those charges had no factual basis. They offered a simple scapegoat for complicated problems and encouraged people to distrust Jewish neighbors.

3. These claims helped the regime present exclusion as protection. During the 1933 boycott, activists targeted Jewish shops as if shopping there threatened Germany. In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of citizenship and banned marriages between Jews and people classified as having "German blood." The laws used ancestry, not personal beliefs, to identify those targeted. By repeating old stereotypes, adding false racial theories, and turning suspicion into law, the Nazis made Jewish people seem like a common enemy. Jewish families faced growing isolation and lost rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did restrictions on Jews' work help an older stereotype develop?

2. How did the Nazis change older religious prejudice into a racial claim?

3. Why would blaming Jews for Germany's defeat and economic hardship help the Nazis cast them as a common enemy?

4. How did the Nuremberg Laws turn the regime's claims about Jews into policy?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label about the 1933 boycott. Explain an older prejudice, a false claim the Nazis added, how the boycott used these ideas, and why the accusations were unfounded.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline an older prejudice, circle a false claim the Nazis added, and number two ways the regime spread or enforced these ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did restrictions on Jews' work help an older stereotype develop?	**Restrictions closed many jobs to Jews, so some worked as moneylenders. Hostile claims then falsely portrayed Jews as greedy.**
2	How did the Nazis change older religious prejudice into a racial claim?	**They falsely claimed Jews were a dangerous race and treated ancestry, rather than religious belief, as the basis for identifying them.**
3	Why would blaming Jews for Germany's defeat and economic hardship help the Nazis cast them as a common enemy?	**It gave people a scapegoat for complicated problems and encouraged distrust of Jewish neighbors.**
4	How did the Nuremberg Laws turn the regime's claims about Jews into policy?	**The laws used ancestry to identify Jews, stripped them of citizenship, and banned marriages between Jews and people classified as having German blood.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For centuries, some Europeans falsely portrayed Jews as greedy. The Nazis reused that lie and added the false claim that Jews were a dangerous racial group. Their 1933 boycott urged shoppers to avoid Jewish-owned stores, turning prejudice into public exclusion. Neither the stereotype nor the racial claim showed that Jewish neighbors caused Germany's problems.

Accept accurate explanations that connect older prejudice to the Nazis' false racial claims, scapegoating, or exclusionary actions. Do not accept responses that present antisemitic accusations as facts.