From Prejudice to Policy

Trace how antisemitism changed in reach and consequences.

SS24.HOS.2c "Trace the intensification of antisemitism in the United States during the early twentieth century."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline examples of antisemitism, then number them in the order they occurred. Circle words that show how its reach or consequences changed over time.

How Antisemitism Intensified

1 At the start of the twentieth century, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in U.S. cities, where many built schools, unions, businesses, and religious communities. They also faced exclusion from some jobs, clubs, and neighborhoods. Hostility could turn violent. In 1913, a Georgia jury convicted Leo Frank, a Jewish factory manager, of murder amid a trial shaped by antisemitic prejudice. After his sentence was commuted, a mob lynched him in 1915. The lynching showed how antisemitic accusations could move from a courtroom into mob violence. The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, worked to challenge attacks on Jews.

2 Between 1920 and 1922, Henry Ford's newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, spread false claims that Jews secretly controlled world events. It promoted *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a forgery, as if it were evidence. Ford's fame helped these lies reach readers far beyond one city. At the same time, Congress passed immigration laws in 1921 and 1924 that sharply limited arrivals from Eastern and Southern Europe. The laws did not name Jews, but they restricted immigration from regions where many Jews lived. Antisemitism now appeared not only in local exclusion and violence but also in widely circulated propaganda and policies with unequal effects.

3 During the Great Depression, hardship gave some public figures new opportunities to spread conspiracy theories. By the late 1930s, radio priest Charles Coughlin broadcast antisemitic claims to a national audience. As Nazi persecution drove Jews to seek safety, U.S. immigration quotas and widespread hostility made refuge difficult. In 1939, the United States did not allow the refugee ship *St. Louis* to land and admit its passengers. The ship returned to Europe, where several countries took in its passengers. Some later died in the Holocaust. The history shows an escalation in reach and consequences, although many Americans opposed antisemitism and helped Jewish refugees.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the treatment of Jews move beyond everyday exclusion in the Leo Frank case?

2. How did Ford's newspaper change the reach of antisemitic claims compared with the earlier examples in the passage?

3. What new consequence did the 1921 and 1924 immigration laws have for Jews from Eastern and Southern Europe?

4. By the late 1930s, how had both the reach and the consequences of antisemitism changed?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word museum label tracing antisemitism across at least three periods in the passage. Connect a change in how it spread to a change in its consequences, and make clear that not all Americans supported it.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HOS.2c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline examples of antisemitism, then number them in the order they occurred. Circle words that show how its reach or consequences changed over time. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the treatment of Jews move beyond everyday exclusion in the Leo Frank case?	**Beyond exclusion from jobs, clubs, and neighborhoods, antisemitic prejudice shaped Frank's trial, and a mob lynched him in 1915.**
2	How did Ford's newspaper change the reach of antisemitic claims compared with the earlier examples in the passage?	**The earlier examples involved local exclusion and violence. Ford's newspaper spread false claims to readers far beyond one city.**
3	What new consequence did the 1921 and 1924 immigration laws have for Jews from Eastern and Southern Europe?	**Although the laws did not name Jews, they sharply limited immigration from regions where many Jews lived.**
4	By the late 1930s, how had both the reach and the consequences of antisemitism changed?	**Coughlin's radio broadcasts brought antisemitic claims to a national audience. Immigration quotas and hostility also made it difficult for Jews fleeing Nazi persecution to find refuge in the United States.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In the early 1900s, Jewish Americans faced barriers in daily life, and Leo Frank's lynching showed that prejudice could also turn deadly. In the 1920s, Henry Ford's newspaper carried fabricated accusations to readers across the country, giving old hostility a wider audience. Immigration restrictions also narrowed a possible path to safety for Jews from Eastern Europe. By the late 1930s, antisemitic radio broadcasts reached a national audience, while refugees struggled to enter the United States. This pattern shows rising public reach and more serious consequences, but many Americans challenged antisemitism.

Accept answers that accurately trace changes over time and distinguish laws with unequal effects from laws that explicitly named Jews. For Part 3, look for at least three periods, a connection between reach and consequences, and the stated qualification.