Ideas into Actions

Trace how Nazi racial beliefs shaped policy at home and abroad.

SS24.HOS.6 "Explain how Nazis' racial beliefs were representative of their overall worldview.* 6a Describe the concept of the "Aryan Race" in Nazi ideology. 6b Analyze the Nazis' pursuit of racial purity..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the claim that placed the supposed "Aryan race" above others, circle two policies that enforced Nazi racial beliefs inside Germany, and number two actions carried out beyond Germany's borders. Use your marks to trace how one worldview shaped different decisions.

A Worldview Put into Practice

1. In a 1930s German classroom, a student might have seen a chart sorting people into supposed racial groups. Such charts reflected Nazi ideology, not scientific fact. Nazis claimed that an "Aryan race," especially people they described as Germanic, stood above other people. They treated Jewish identity as an inherited racial trait, not simply a religion, and falsely blamed Jews for Germany's problems. Nazi leaders pictured history as a struggle between groups, with the strongest entitled to rule. This invented hierarchy linked their vision of a powerful German nation to the exclusion of anyone they labeled inferior.

2. That worldview shaped laws and medical practice. A 1933 law allowed officials to force sterilization on people they classified as having certain hereditary conditions. Sterilization prevented them from having biological children, whether they consented or not. Nazis called this eugenics, claiming it would protect the nation's future, but their categories and judgments rested on prejudice and coercion. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of German citizenship and banned marriage between Jews and people classified as having "German or related blood." Beginning in 1939, the regime also organized the murder of people with disabilities. These policies turned a false racial ideal into state violence.

3. The same beliefs shaped plans beyond Germany's borders. Nazi leaders sought "living space" in eastern Europe for Germans they considered racially superior. After invading Poland in 1939, they seized land, drove people from their homes, and targeted Polish leaders and Jews. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, its leaders framed the campaign as a racial war against people they deemed inferior and against a government they falsely linked to a Jewish conspiracy. Mobile killing units murdered Jewish communities behind the front lines. Nazi foreign policy thus joined conquest to the destruction of groups the regime imagined as threats.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Nazi idea of an "Aryan race" fit their larger view of history and power?

2. How did forced sterilization serve the Nazis' goal of racial purity?

3. How did the Nuremberg Laws turn Nazi racial beliefs into rules about citizenship and marriage?

4. How did Nazi racial beliefs shape both the goal of expansion into eastern Europe and actions taken after the invasions?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 95 word museum label explaining how one false Nazi belief about human groups connected a policy inside Germany to a goal beyond its borders. Include a consequence for people in each setting, and explain how the two settings differed.

Ideas into Actions

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the claim that placed the supposed "Aryan race" above others, circle two policies that enforced Nazi racial beliefs inside Germany, and number two actions carried out beyond Germany's borders. Use your marks to trace how one worldview shaped different decisions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Nazi idea of an "Aryan race" fit their larger view of history and power?	**Nazis falsely placed the supposed "Aryan race" above others and viewed history as a struggle in which groups they called stronger were entitled to rule.**
2	How did forced sterilization serve the Nazis' goal of racial purity?	**Officials prevented people they classified as having hereditary conditions from having biological children, claiming this would protect the nation's future.**
3	How did the Nuremberg Laws turn Nazi racial beliefs into rules about citizenship and marriage?	**The laws stripped Jews of German citizenship and banned marriage between Jews and people classified as having "German or related blood."**
4	How did Nazi racial beliefs shape both the goal of expansion into eastern Europe and actions taken after the invasions?	**Nazi leaders sought land for Germans they considered superior. After invading, they displaced people and targeted or murdered groups they deemed inferior or threatening, including Jews.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Nazi regime imagined an "Aryan race" entitled to power, although human beings cannot be ranked by race. Inside Germany, officials forcibly sterilized people they labeled hereditarily unfit, taking away their ability to have biological children. Beyond Germany, leaders sought land in eastern Europe for Germans and expelled or killed people already living there. These actions took place in different settings, one through state control of bodies and the other through conquest and occupation. Both grew from the false belief that some people deserved rights and others did not.

Accept accurate alternatives from the passage, including the murder of people with disabilities as a domestic policy. Student responses should identify Nazi racial claims as false, not present them as scientific facts.