Messages and Power

Identify how the Nazi regime used propaganda, repression, and antisemitic laws

MWH.C.6.4.D "Identify the characteristics of fascism, including how such totalitarian regimes utilized propaganda, repressed dissention, and instigated antisemitism (e.g., Nuremberg Laws in Germany)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline examples of propaganda, circle examples of repression, and number the two restrictions imposed by the Nuremberg Laws. Use your marks to identify how each method helped the regime exercise power.

Power in Nazi Germany

1. In 1930s Germany, a family might hear the same political message on the radio, read it in a newspaper, and see it on a street poster. After Adolf Hitler became chancellor in 1933, the Nazi regime pushed a vision of a powerful, united nation under one leader. Fascism rejected political equality and treated loyalty to the nation and its leader as more important than individual rights. The government controlled news and public events to spread its message. This propaganda praised Hitler and presented critics as threats, making state power seem necessary to many listeners.

2. The messages had force behind them. The Nazi regime banned rival political parties and shut down independent newspapers. The Gestapo, the secret state police, investigated people suspected of opposing the government. Critics could be arrested and sent to prisons or concentration camps without a fair trial. People who feared punishment might stop speaking openly, even if they disagreed. These actions did more than silence a few opponents. By removing ways to challenge official claims, repression helped the regime maintain control over public debate and everyday political life.

3. Nazi leaders also made antisemitism, hatred of Jewish people, a central part of their rule. Propaganda falsely blamed Jews for Germany's problems and portrayed them as outsiders. In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of German citizenship and banned marriages between Jews and people classified by the regime as having "German or related blood." These laws turned prejudice into state policy and denied Jewish people equal standing under the law. The regime's messages and laws worked together: repeated false claims encouraged discrimination, while official rules gave that discrimination the power of the state.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What belief about political power in the passage is a characteristic of fascism? Give one example of how the Nazi regime put that belief into practice.

2. Identify one way the regime spread propaganda. What did that propaganda encourage people to believe?

3. Identify one way the regime repressed dissent. How did that action limit challenges to its claims?

4. Which two restrictions did the Nuremberg Laws impose? Explain why these laws are an example of state-sponsored antisemitism.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a museum label of 70 to 90 words about a fictional resident of Germany in late 1935 who hears a state radio broadcast, considers speaking against it, and sees a notice about the Nuremberg Laws. Show how propaganda, repression, and antisemitic policy each shape the scene without inventing a historical quotation.

ANSWER KEY

Messages and Power

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.6.4.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline examples of propaganda, circle examples of repression, and number the two restrictions imposed by the Nuremberg Laws. Use your marks to identify how each method helped the regime exercise power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What belief about political power in the passage is a characteristic of fascism? Give one example of how the Nazi regime put that belief into practice.	**Fascism placed loyalty to the nation and its leader above individual rights. The regime controlled news to spread its message.**
2	Identify one way the regime spread propaganda. What did that propaganda encourage people to believe?	**The regime used radio broadcasts, newspapers, or posters to praise Hitler and portray critics as threats.**
3	Identify one way the regime repressed dissent. How did that action limit challenges to its claims?	**The regime shut down independent newspapers, removing a way to challenge official claims.**
4	Which two restrictions did the Nuremberg Laws impose? Explain why these laws are an example of state-sponsored antisemitism.	**The laws stripped Jews of German citizenship and banned marriages between Jews and people classified as having German or related blood. They used government authority to discriminate against Jewish people.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In late 1935, a fictional shopkeeper hears a radio program praising Hitler and blaming Jews for Germany's troubles. She recognizes the accusation as false, but she keeps her objection private: the Gestapo can investigate critics, and opponents can be imprisoned. Later, she reads a notice about the Nuremberg Laws. Her Jewish neighbor has lost German citizenship, and the laws bar marriage between Jews and people classified as having German or related blood. The scene shows how propaganda, fear, and discriminatory law reinforce state control.

Accept other passage-supported examples of propaganda or repression. For the museum label, look for historically accurate connections among all three methods, not just a list of them.