Behind the Walls

Read how ghettos served Nazi policies and how Jews resisted.

TOT.C.7.4 "Explain the use of ghettos, including the displacement and deportation of Jews to ghettos, attempts at escape, and forms of resistance, exemplified by the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways Nazi authorities used ghettos, circle one attempt to escape, and number three different forms of resistance. Use your marks to explain how people responded to Nazi control.

Life and Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto

1 After Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Nazi authorities forced Jewish families from their homes into crowded, enclosed districts called ghettos. Some Jews were deported from other towns into these districts, often with little time to pack. In Warsaw, a wall and guarded gates separated the ghetto from the rest of the city. Nazi officials used ghettos to isolate Jews, control their movement, and seize their property. Families shared cramped rooms while food rations and medicine were scarce. The walls did not make the ghetto a safe refuge. They helped authorities confine people before later deportations.

2 In the Warsaw Ghetto, people tried to survive and resist Nazi control in different ways. Some slipped through openings in the wall or escaped with help from people outside, though capture could mean death for those escaping and those helping them. Others smuggled food into the ghetto, taught children in secret, or recorded daily life so evidence of persecution would survive. In 1942, German authorities deported hundreds of thousands of Jews from Warsaw to the Treblinka killing center, where most were murdered. These deportations made clear that the ghetto was not merely a place of confinement but also a stage in mass murder.

3 In April 1943, when German forces entered the Warsaw Ghetto to resume deportations, Jewish fighters launched an armed uprising. They had few weapons and faced a far larger, better equipped force, yet they fought for weeks. Some residents hid in bunkers rather than report for deportation, another way of refusing Nazi orders. German forces burned buildings and crushed the uprising in May. Many Jews were killed, and others were deported to camps. The fighters could not free the ghetto, but their actions showed that people facing overwhelming violence could organize and resist. Escape, hidden learning, smuggling, and armed fighting carried different risks and served different purposes.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did forcing Jews into the Warsaw Ghetto help Nazi authorities control them?

2. How did the 1942 deportations show a use of the ghetto beyond confinement?

3. Explain one way people attempted to escape the Warsaw Ghetto and one risk they faced.

4. How did the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising differ from one other form of resistance in the passage?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 95 word museum label explaining how Nazi use of ghettos shaped people's choices. Include forced movement into a ghetto, one attempt to escape, and how the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising differed from another form of resistance in the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Behind the Walls

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.7.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways Nazi authorities used ghettos, circle one attempt to escape, and number three different forms of resistance. Use your marks to explain how people responded to Nazi control. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did forcing Jews into the Warsaw Ghetto help Nazi authorities control them?	**It confined Jews behind a wall and guarded gates, isolating them and restricting their movement.**
2	How did the 1942 deportations show a use of the ghetto beyond confinement?	**German authorities deported hundreds of thousands of Jews from the ghetto to Treblinka, where most were murdered.**
3	Explain one way people attempted to escape the Warsaw Ghetto and one risk they faced.	**Some slipped through openings in the wall. They risked death if captured.**
4	How did the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising differ from one other form of resistance in the passage?	**Fighters used weapons to oppose German forces and renewed deportations. Secret teachers resisted in a different way by continuing children's education.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

These walls served Nazi plans, not the safety of the people inside. Authorities forced Jewish families from their homes into the Warsaw Ghetto, where guards restricted movement and later deportations sent many to Treblinka. Some people escaped through openings in the wall, risking death if caught. Secret teachers resisted by protecting learning, while fighters in the 1943 uprising used weapons to oppose renewed deportations. Both forms of resistance challenged Nazi control, but neither erased the danger or the enormous loss of life.

Accept other passage-supported examples of escape and resistance. Responses should distinguish armed resistance from another form without suggesting that all ghetto residents could escape or fight.