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| **Mosaic of Victims: An Overview**  *Nazi ideology identified a multitude of enemies and led to the systematic persecution and murder of many millions of people, both Jews and non-Jews.*   Although the Jews were their primary targets, the Nazis also persecuted other groups for racial or ideological reasons. Among the earliest victims of Nazi discrimination in Germany were political opponents - primarily Communists, Socialists, Democrats, and labor union leaders. In 1933, the SS established the first *concentration camp*, Dachau, as a detention center for thousands of German *political prisoners*. The Nazis also persecuted authors and artists whose works they considered rebellious or who were Jewish, subjecting them to arrest, economic restrictions, and other forms of discrimination.   The Nazis targeted Roma (Gypsies) on racial grounds. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws (German laws which defined Jews by blood according to racist theories) were later adapted to include Roma. The Nazis termed Roma "work-shy" and "asocial"- unproductive and socially unfit. Roma deported to the Lodz ghetto were among the first to be killed in mobile gas vans at the [Chelmno](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005194) extermination camp in Poland. The Nazis also deported more than 20,000 Roma to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, where most of them were murdered in the [gas chambers](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005220).   The Nazis viewed [Poles](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005473) and other Slavic peoples as inferior, and slated them for suppression, forced labor, and eventual annihilation. Poles, who were considered ideologically dangerous (including thousands of intellectuals and Catholic priests), were targeted for execution. Between 1939 and 1945, at least 1.5 million Polish citizens were deported to German territory for forced labor. Hundreds of thousands were also imprisoned in Nazi [concentration camps](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005144). It is estimated that the Germans killed at least 1.9 million non-Jewish Polish civilians during [World War II](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005137).   In the [German-occupied Soviet Union](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005164), the Red Army political officers were subject to murder. During 1941-1942, German military authorities and the German SS collaborated on a racist policy of mass murder of [Soviet prisoners of war](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007178): Jews, persons with "Asiatic features," and top political/military leaders were selected out and shot. Around 3 million others were held in makeshift camps without proper shelter, food, or medicine with the deliberate intent that they die.   The Nazis incarcerated Christian church leaders who opposed Nazism, as well as thousands of [Jehovah's Witnesses](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005394) who refused to salute Adolf Hitler or to serve in the German army. Nazis also murdered an estimated 200,000 individuals with mental or physical disabilities. Male [homosexuals](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005261), whose behavior they considered a hindrance to the preservation of the German nation, were also targeted.   **Why did Hitler target Jews?** An important term to understand in regards to Nazi ideas is ‘scapegoat’. Hitler and the Nazis said the Jews were responsible for huge events like losing World War I and the economic crisis. This was totally untrue. But by giving the Jews the blame, Hitler created an enemy. Hitler said that all Germany’s problems had been caused by the Jews. Many people believed him. Hitler and the Nazis were able to identify Jews through the census, police records, tax forms, synagogue membership, and word of mouth.  **Banish** The solution to all these problems was to banish the Jews from society. With this political message and the promise to make Germany a large and economically powerful country Hitler’s party won the 1932 election. In 1933 he and his party came to power.  **Anti-Semitism was not new** Hitler did not invent the hatred of Jews. Hitler built on and used anti-Semitic ideas that already existed. He was Austrian and grew up in Vienna where the mayor was extremely anti-Semitic and where hatred of Jews was widespread.   **'Race'** Hitler and the Nazis also thought that people could be divided into different races and that there was a struggle going on between these different races. According to the Nazis the ‘Aryan race’ was the best and strongest race. Jews were of another inferior race. In fact, so inferior that they were not considered to be ‘people’ by the Nazis  **Adapted from United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and AnneFrank.org**  **Background:** This story comes from *Der Giftpilz,* an anti-Semitic children’s book published by Julius Streicher*.* He was executed as a war criminal in 1946.  **The Poisonous Mushroom** A mother and her young boy are gathering mushrooms in the German forest. The boy finds some poisonous ones. The mother explains that there are good mushrooms and poisonous ones, and, as they go home, says: “Look, Franz, human beings in this world are like the mushrooms in the forest. There are good mushrooms and there are good people. There are poisonous, bad mushrooms and there are bad people. And we have to be on our guard against bad people just as we have to be on guard against poisonous mushrooms. Do you understand that?https://wolfsonianfiulibrary.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/xb1989-123_000.jpg”  “Yes, mother,” Franz replies. “I understand that in dealing with bad people trouble may arise, just as when one eats a poisonous mushroom. One may even die!”  “And do you know, too, who these bad men are, these poisonous mushrooms of mankind?” the mother continued. Franz slaps his chest in pride: “Of course I know, mother! They are the Jews! Our teacher has often told us about them.”  The mother praises her boy for his intelligence, and goes on to explain the different kinds of “poisonous” Jews: the Jewish pedlar, the Jewish cattle-dealer, the Kosher butcher, the Jewish doctor, the baptised Jew, and so on.  “However they disguise themselves, or however friendly they try to be, affirming a thousand times their good intentions to us, one must not believe them. Jews they are and Jews they remain. For our Volk they are poison.”  “Like the poisonous mushroom!” says Franz.  “Yes, my child! Just as a single poisonous mushroom can kill a whole family, so a solitary Jew can destroy a whole village, a whole city, even an entire Volk. Franz has understood.  “Tell me, mother, do all Gentiles know that the Jew is as dangerous as a poisonous mushroom?” Mother shakes her head.  “Unfortunately not, my child. There are millions of Gentiles who do not yet know the Jews. So we have to enlighten people and warn them against the Jews. Our young people, too, must be warned. Our boys and girls must learn to know the Jew. They must learn that the Jew is the most dangerous poison-mushroom in existence. Just as poisonous mushrooms spring up everywhere, so the Jew is found in every country in the world. Just as poisonous mushrooms often lead to the most dreadful calamity, so the Jew is the cause of misery and distress, illness and death.”  *The author then concludes this story by pointing the moral:* German youth must learn to recognize the Jewish poison-mushroom. They must learn what a danger the Jew is for the German *Volk* and for the whole world. They must learn that the Jewish problem involves the destiny of us all. This tale tells the truth about the Jewish poison-mushroom. It shows the many shapes the Jew assumes. It shows the depravity and baseness of the Jewish race. It shows the Jew for what he really is: the Devil in human form. |

**In your notes, reflect on The Poisonous Mushroom   
   
Describe The Poisonous Mushroom as a piece of propaganda. What techniques do propagandists use?  
   
  
  
Why can propaganda be so effective when it targets children?**

**Poisonous Mushroom Re-do**1. Please re-read the prompt questions and re-write your paragraphs  
2. Identify (by highlighting or underlining in different colors) your claim, support, commentary, conclusion   
3. Attach your original version  
  
- Not writing a summary of the story  
- Answer all parts of the question (techniques of propagandists)  
- Follow the requirements of claim, support, commentary, transition/conclusion  
- English conventions  
 ~you, spelling (believe, propaganda)   
 ~indent paragraphs