THE TEACHING GUIDES

Teaching the History of Antisemitism

One lesson, one unit, or a semester · Free, ready to teach · History electives, Holocaust and genocide studies, world history, and current events

Start at your size. Fifteen minutes: add one chapter's story, source, and question to the unit you are teaching, at teachjewishhistory.org/for-tomorrow. One lesson tomorrow: The Nazi Synthesis, planned on page three, beat by beat. One unit: the chart on page two walks the arc chapter by chapter, each one a single lesson. The semester: teach Unit 3 in order, and let the registers keep the record current to this quarter.

Two facts

The subject has a documented arc. Each turn of the arc left documents behind, and each chapter is built from them: a sermon, an accusation, an edict, a race law, a forgery, a synthesis, and the record since 1945.

Your state likely requires it. A 2026 federal review found that 42 of the 50 states and D.C. require Holocaust education through academic standards or state law. The requirement usually arrives without a curriculum. Building one is left to you.

AM I QUALIFIED TO TEACH THE HISTORY OF ANTISEMITISM?

If you teach social studies, history, or English in grades 6 to 12, in a public, private, or religious school, yes. You do not need to be a specialist. The pages are written for readers new to the subject: terms are defined, events are dated, people are introduced. If you can assign a reading and lead a discussion, you can teach this.

> ### OPEN EVERY LESSON WITH THE STORY SO FAR
>
> Five sentences, spoken aloud, ground any lesson from this guide. Each has a chapter behind it if the class wants more.
>
> 1. The Jews are a people, with a faith, a language, and a calendar, more than 3,000 years old. /topic-who-are-the-jews
> 2. Their homeland is the Land of Israel, where their two Temples stood in Jerusalem. /topic-land-of-israel · /topic-temples
> 3. The diaspora spread Jewish communities across the world, before and after the Second Temple fell in the year 70, and some always remained in the land. /topic-diaspora · /topic-continuous-presence
> 4. Wherever they lived, they kept the same book, the same calendar, and the same hope of return. /topic-sacred-texts · /topic-calendar
> 5. The hatred they met kept changing its reasons, faith, then money, then race, but the target never changed. /topic-adversus-judaeos · /topic-nazi-synthesis

The arc, chapter by chapter

The chart walks the history in order. Each row is one turn of the arc and the chapter that documents it, each a single lesson. Taught in sequence they form a course. Taken singly, each stands alone, and every chapter names its courses and standards codes in its Classroom Connections section.

THE TURN	THE CHAPTER
Contempt taught as doctrine	Adversus Judaeos · the preaching tradition of the early church, and the deicide charge the Catholic Church rejected in 1965 in Nostra Aetate · /topic-adversus-judaeos
Life under Islam	The Dhimma · protection and subordination in the same law, from Granada's Jewish commander and the 1066 massacre to Maimonides, who fled Córdoba as a boy and wrote a code of Jewish law studied to this day · /topic-dhimma
The accusation	The Blood Libel · Norwich, 1144: the first recorded case, the machinery of accusation it founded, and Pope Innocent IV's 1247 bull rejecting it · /topic-blood-libel
The expulsions	The Expulsions · England 1290 to Spain 1492 and Portugal 1497: expulsion as statecraft, in the edicts' own words, and the exiles' new centers, from Salonica and Istanbul to Safed, home of Joseph Karo's Shulchan Aruch · /topic-expulsions
The wall	The Ghetto System · Venice, 1516, whose name the Nazis later borrowed, and the work made inside and beside its gates, from Sara Copia Sullam's salon to the first complete printed Talmud · /topic-ghetto-system
Race replaces faith	The Racial Turn of 1879 · the hatred rewritten as biology, and the answers it met, from the 1880 declaration of seventy-five public figures to Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* · /topic-racial-turn
The violence organized	The Russian Pogroms · the largest Jewish population on earth, confined by law and under attack inside the Pale, and the self-defense groups that formed across it after Kishinev · /topic-russian-empire-pogroms
The forgery	The Protocols Forgery · copied from a French satire that never mentioned Jews, exposed in the Times of London in 1921, and judged a forgery by a court in Bern in 1935 · /topic-protocols
The synthesis	The Nazi Synthesis · seven inheritances, and what was new: their fusion and a state to enforce it · /topic-nazi-synthesis
The murder	Unit 4 entire, seven chapters from the prewar years to resistance and rescue · /section-4
The eastward turn	The Eastward Turn · centuries of coexistence and subordination without this text, then the Protocols in Arabic by 1925, Nazi wartime radio, the reprints of the decades after 1948, and the channel that carried the material east · /topic-hatred-moves-east
The violence since 1945	The Terror Record · documented attacks under a political banner, from Entebbe to Buenos Aires, case by case, and the city that marches every July 18 with the names of the 85 · /topic-terror-record
The present	Contemporary Antisemitism · The Hatred That Outlived the War · the current record, in documents, and how to recognize it today · /topic-contemporary-antisemitism · /topic-it-didnt-end
Denial and afterlife	Holocaust Denial and the Response · The Afterlife of the Image · how denial works and how the record is defended, and what societies do with images of contempt: recontextualize, repudiate, refute · /topic-holocaust-denial · /topic-afterlife-image
The response	The Postwar Trials · Nostra Aetate · the law's answer and the Church's 1965 reversal of teachings carried for most of two thousand years · /topic-postwar-trials · /topic-nostra-aetate

THE LENS THAT READS THE WHOLE ARC

The Recurring Cycle page names the eight patterns the record shows repeating across centuries and places, and the small set of myths reused at each turn. Its own caution: history does not repeat on a schedule. Project it once at the start of the course, and return to it as each chapter lands.
teachjewishhistory.org/patterns

THE REGISTERS THAT KEEP THE COURSE CURRENT

Three living records carry the history past the textbook's last page. The Legal Record: judgments, treaties, and statutes, updated quarterly, each linked to its primary document. The Incident Record: documented incidents of the contemporary era, each entry ending with a verdict, a plea, or an official finding, and honest about its limits: the entries are landmarks, not a census. Hate Symbols: the symbols students may encounter, decoded for educators. /legal-record · /incident-record · /hate-symbols

One lesson, fully planned

The planned lesson: **The Nazi Synthesis**, the chapter that holds the whole arc on one page. Its opening question frames the course: what was inherited, and what was new? It fits a Modern European History unit on the rise of Nazism, a Holocaust course's opening week, or a standalone lesson. The plan is a floor, not a script: teach it as written, or take the chapter your own way. The chapter page carries the full set of discussion questions, its sources, and key takeaways: the plan below uses the first question, and the rest are there when you want them. teachjewishhistory.org/topic-nazi-synthesis

Before class. Open the chapter. Read it once. Press Open PDF if you want handouts. That is the whole prep.

Opening, 5 min. Ask each student to write one sentence: where did Nazi antisemitism come from? Keep the answers. They revise them at the close.

Reading, 15 min. Read two sections together: "Seven inheritances" and "1935: race made into a diagram of law." Students note which inheritances they recognize from earlier history.

Discussion, 15 min. Discussion question 1, straight from the page: "Choose two of the seven inheritances listed in this Chapter and trace each to its earlier source. What was actually new in the Nazi version?" *Listen for: each inheritance predates Nazism, by decades or by centuries. What was new was the synthesis, and a modern state to enforce it.*

Close, 5 min. Students revise their opening sentences. Then the chapter's second question, for the present: "The Nazi worldview traced every problem to a single cause. Using the synthesis described here, why might that kind of explanation be harder to answer than an ordinary prejudice?"

NEW TO THE SUBJECT ENTIRELY?

Give it one full period: **Who Are the Jews?**, the site's front door: a people, not only a religion. The right first chapter when the subject is new to your class, so students meet a civilization before they meet the hatred. /topic-who-are-the-jews

The anatomy of a chapter

Every chapter page holds a readable history, written to be taught or assigned. Primary sources and images, each credited to its holding institution. Discussion questions that ask students to reason from the documents. Classroom Connections: the courses it fits and the standards it supports. Key takeaways, for review and exit tickets. A printable PDF: one button, the whole chapter.

CAN MY STUDENTS READ THE CHAPTERS?

Most chapters sit at high-school level. The Years Before the Killing reads at middle-school level, and every chapter's print-ready PDF makes excerpting easy for younger classes. A full chapter is a half hour's read: the lesson plans assign sections, not chapters.

DO I NEED APPROVAL TO USE THE SITE?

That depends on your district's materials policy. In many districts, supplemental materials for a course you already teach sit within a teacher's discretion. In others, a principal or department signs off.

If a parent or your principal asks

Here is what to point to.

- **Each Chapter cites its sources on the page.** Documents, laws, and figures are credited, most with a link to the archive or museum that holds the record.
- **For the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, start with the dates.** The Modern State of Israel sets out the main events since 1967 in order, with its sources listed at the end of the Chapter.
- **Hate texts are cited, never linked.**
- **Teaching about religion as history and culture is settled ground** in public schools, drawn in 1963 in Abington v. Schempp: the chapters study a tradition and never practice one.
- **The standards are public.** Every editorial rule the site follows is published at teachjewishhistory.org/editorial-standards, and the chapters in this guide name the state standards they support.

> **What the site adds TO A COURSE ON ANTISEMITISM**
>
> The chapters document each inheritance from its own documents, then the record since 1945, kept current by the registers.

What Teach Jewish History is

It's ready. Every chapter can anchor a lesson, with questions, sources, and a print-ready PDF.

It fits. Chapters drop into the units you already teach, with no new course to add.

It's solid ground. Primary sources and verified standards.

It's free, with no logins and no ads.

The classroom toolkit

- **The Timeline.** Project it as a warm-up, or have students place the day's lesson on it. teachjewishhistory.org/timeline
- **The Museum.** Manuscripts, coins, and objects, each credited to the institution that holds it. One object, projected, opens a class. teachjewishhistory.org/museum
- **The Recurring Cycle.** The eight-pattern lens, on one page. teachjewishhistory.org/patterns
- **Virtual Field Trips.** Archaeological sites, memorials, and historic Jewish quarters, from the projector. teachjewishhistory.org/field-trips
- **Films.** Curated film and video by unit, grade bands marked. teachjewishhistory.org/films
- **The Incident Record.** Documented antisemitic incidents of the contemporary era, each entry ending with its record: a verdict, a plea, or an official finding. teachjewishhistory.org/incident-record
- **The Legal Record.** Judgments, treaties, and statutes, each linked to its primary document. teachjewishhistory.org/legal-record
- **Hate Symbols.** The educator's guide to the symbols and what they mean. teachjewishhistory.org/hate-symbols
- **Misconceptions and the Glossary.** The beliefs students bring to class, set beside the documents, and every term defined. teachjewishhistory.org/misconceptions · teachjewishhistory.org/glossary
- **The source-literacy lessons.** Reading documents against headlines, and recognizing propaganda, with printable handouts. teachjewishhistory.org/for-teachers
- **Standards & Mandates.** The state requirements, on one page: find your state's. teachjewishhistory.org/state-mandates
- **Sample Syllabi.** The full elective plan, plus a college survey. teachjewishhistory.org/sample-syllabi

Find your way on the site

Home · teachjewishhistory.org
The Curriculum Gap, why the site exists · /curriculum-gap
Table of Contents, the whole site on one page · /table-of-contents
For Teachers, the guides, a self-paced course, and registration for updates · /for-teachers
For Students · /for-students
K–5, the early-grades program · /k5

EVERY CHAPTER CAN ANCHOR A LESSON

Each one can anchor a lesson, with discussion questions, sources, a print-ready PDF, and a Where-this-Chapter-fits note naming the courses it supports, all on the chapter page. The shelf is a menu, not a syllabus: take the chapter your course calls for, and leave the rest where they are. The lessons planned in this guide come from this shelf, and any other chapter teaches the same way.

Unit 1 · The Jewish World · /section-1
Who Are the Jews? · The Land of Israel · The Continuous Jewish Presence in the Land · The First and Second Temples · The Synagogue · The Sacred Texts · The Calendar & the Cycle of the Year · Ritual Objects and Material Culture · The Jewish Life Cycle · The Diaspora

Unit 2 · Communities Across the World · /section-2
A Connected People · The Jews of Iraq · The Jews of Iran · The Jews of North Africa · The Departure from MENA · The Jews of Spain and the Sephardic World · The Jews of Poland and Lithuania · Soviet Jewry · American Jewry · Ethiopian Jewry, Beta Israel · The Modern State of Israel

Unit 3 · The Evolution of Antisemitism · /section-3
Adversus Judaeos · The Blood Libel · The Ghetto System · The Expulsions · The Racial Turn of 1879 · The Russian Pogroms · The Protocols Forgery · The Nazi Synthesis · The Dhimma · The Eastward Turn · The Terror Record · Contemporary Antisemitism

Unit 4 · The Holocaust Era · /section-4
The Years Before the Killing · Aktion T-4 · The Nazi Ghettos · The Camp System · The Einsatzgruppen · The Holocaust in the Middle East and North Africa · Jewish Resistance & Rescue

Unit 5 · Jewish Contributions · /section-5
Across the Fields · Rashi · Maimonides · Joseph Karo · Moses Mendelssohn · Levi Strauss · Emma Lazarus · Samuel Gompers · Theodor Herzl · Albert Einstein · The Founders of Hollywood · Jonas Salk

Unit 6 · Memory, Responsibility, and Today · /section-6
Liberation and the Displaced Persons · The Postwar Trials · Hannah Arendt · Postwar Restitution · The Memory Architecture · Nostra Aetate · Holocaust Denial and the Response · The Afterlife of the Image · The Hatred That Outlived the War

Teach Jewish History (teachjewishhistory.org) is a free online textbook of Jewish history and the history of antisemitism, built from primary sources. It was built to close a gap: in many standard textbooks, the Jewish people appear in the ancient world, then reappear more than two thousand years later as victims of the Holocaust, a history with no in-between. Read in order, its six units and more than 60 chapters form a full course. Taken singly, each chapter drops into lessons teachers already teach. Every chapter names the standards it supports in its Classroom Connections section.

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