



VOCABULARY FOR *Elly: My True Story of the Holocaust*

As your class studies the Holocaust, share these helpful definitions with your students. You can display them in the classroom or email/hand them out as a guide.

THE HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust (or Shoah) was the genocide (or systematic killing) of more than six million Jews and other “undesirables” by Nazi Germany between 1941 and 1945 in World War II.

NAZIS

Nazis were members of the Nazi party: a far-right antisemitic political group led by Adolf Hitler. Hitler was elected as Germany’s president in 1934; the Nazis began the Holocaust in 1941.

ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism is a strong hatred for and prejudice against Jewish people. The Holocaust and core Nazi beliefs were based on antisemitism.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

A concentration camp is a place where persecuted people are imprisoned, usually in squalid conditions.

EXTERMINATION CAMPS

During the Holocaust, the worst concentration camps were known as extermination camps. They were designed to kill many people as quickly as possible. One of the most famous and deadliest extermination camps was Auschwitz. About 1.1 million people died there.

GESTAPO

The Gestapo was the secret state police in Nazi Germany. They had no judicial oversight and were allowed to use acts of terrorism to persecute anyone considered to be an “enemy of the state.”

THE SS

The SS began as Hitler’s personal bodyguards. Over time, they became the military leaders of the Holocaust and some of the most powerful people in the Nazi party.



Thousands of suitcases collected by the Nazis from the Jewish people who were murdered at concentration camps.



Roll call at Auschwitz-II/Birkenau, the camp where Elly was imprisoned.



Gates of Auschwitz (“*Arbeit macht frei*” means “Work makes you free”).

