

The Century: Peter Jennings Over the Edge: Late 1930s

1. What does Hitler use the 1936 Olympic games to show? Why were Glickman and Staller not allowed to run?

Hitler used the Olympics to show the world that Nazi Germany was civilized and thriving; but, he also wanted to use the games to promote the idea of Aryan superiority since most of the awards were won by whites. Glickman and Staller were two American runners who were not allowed to run because they were Jewish.

2. Why were Jesse Owens's victories in the Olympics such an embarrassment to Hitler?

Hitler believed that Jesse Owens victory was a slap in the face of the whole Aryan superiority thing. After Jesse's victory Hitler angrily pushed out his chair stood up with a growl and walked out of the stadium.

3. What impact does photojournalism have on people's understanding of the Great Depression in America?

For once in human history a government used photography to show the public what was happening in the lives of normal citizens who still lived in poverty. This made the faction of the public that was not in poverty to want to help these other Americans.

4. How does FDR communicate with the people? What does he tell people? Give examples.

FDR used the radio as a way to tell the public about what was going on at the time and people loved to listen to the radio rather than just read the newspaper. Usually FDR would tell the public about power plants being re opened, new inventions, or new roads and canals.

5. How does Goebbles use the mass media to spread Hitler's ideas? What were his ideas?

To spread nazi ideas to the public Goebbles used the radio and movies to make the nazi way of life look like a dream come true. The people were taught that they were the greatest nation on earth; that they were smarter, stronger, better looking than all other people and that they must push their way of life on other people.

6. Explain Hitler's speaking techniques.

When Hitler speaks to the public he prefers to have the audience in organized groups and in uniform to make the German people look more powerful. He would begin soft and quiet and then work his way up to a grand finish with lots of yelling and the public was swept along.

7. What type of books did the Nazis ban?

The book burning was conducted by the German Student Union and was meant to destroy books written by authors whose ideas did not support or even threatened the Nazi movement. Authors included liberal, anarchists, communist, and Jewish writers.

8. Who were the Brown shirts and what did they do? Where might they send you?

The Brown shirts were in a way Hitler's secret police who patrolled the streets and rooted out and arrested anyone who didn't support or opposed Hitler. Thousands of political opponents and ordinary people were sent to concentration camps throughout Germany.

9. Explain how Jews were treated in Germany. How are they proven to be inferior by the Nazis?

Jews were seen as less than human creatures that had to be exterminated from the earth; they often lost their property and rights so life was extremely difficult for Jewish people. The Nazis decided that superior people had specific traits such as distance between the eyes or how big is the nose and the whole blonde hair and blue eyes. These tests were ridiculous but the Nazis took seriously enough to have an excuse to be cruel to other people.

10. How did the Austrians receive the Germans? What was the result for Austrian Jews?

The Austrians welcomed the Nazis with open arms because they wanted the same wealth and power of Germany to come to Austria as well. Soon Austrian Jews were treated the same as the German Jews and things were only going to get worse.

11. What did the boxing match between Louis and Schmelling represent?

Joe Louis was a black American and Schmelling was German as well as Hitler's pride and joy so this match would be very important to both sides and in one round Joe knocked Schmelling unconscious. Americans were truly challenging Hitler's Aryan superiority ideas since that was the second time an African American beat a white Nazi.

12. What was the Abraham Lincoln brigade and why were they fighting? What was the result of the Spanish Civil War?

The brigade thought it was their duty to defend democracy and freedom from fascism so 2,400 Americans signed up to fight as volunteers in Spain against fascist rebels. Eventually the war was lost and fascism took over the country.

13. What is the background to the Munich conference and what was agreed to by Hitler and Chamberlain?

The conference was basically allowing Germany to take the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia and bring 3.5 million Germans into the Reich. In the end Britain, France, and Italy allowed Germany to have the land as long as they did not invade anywhere else.

14. Explain Kristallnacht! Why was it justified?

On November 9th to the 10th 1938 Nazis in Germany set synagogues ablaze destroyed Jewish homes, businesses, and schools and killed almost 100 Jews in the aftermath 30,000 Jews were sent to concentration camps. The Germans justified this from the attack on the German Embassy in Paris by a Jewish boy who killed a minor German official; German officials used this event to tell the public that this is what the Jews want to do to everyone.

15. Explain the plight of the ship St. Louis.

The St. Louis set off from Germany with over 900 Jewish refugees who began their journey by traveling to Cuba but they were not allowed entrance next they headed north to America the ship sat for 5 days off the coast of Florida unfortunately they eventually had to head back to Europe when the US government refused to help them. Then at the last minute Britain, France, and Holland offered to give the Jews a haven sadly by the end of the war more than 600 of these people would die at the hands of the Nazis.

16. What was going on in America in 1939?

Americans were growing concerned about the current situation but they still wanted to remain neutral if a war should break out. America stood in defiance of Germany again when they allowed African American singer Marian Anderson to sing at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. to show what America stood for. America was also interested in advancing basic living to make life easier leading to the New York World Fair where everyone was looking at new invention that were going to make life easier.

17. Why did Britain declare war on Germany? What is Blitzkrieg?

After the German invasion of Poland Britain and France declared war on Germany it didn't take long for German forces to steamroll every country around them including France thankfully Britain was protected by the English Channel. Blitzkrieg was a process where German bombers would bomb British cities in a hope of crushing British resistance in order to make invasion easier.

18. What was the state of the American military in 1940?

The American military was in dreadful condition at the time; the American army at the time was smaller than Belgium's and many of the recruits had little to no experience. Recruits would often use sticks and wooden carve outs and tomato cans to train for war and many of the men were afraid when they thought about the condition of their military compared to Germany's.