

Short lesson 5: What was Dachau? (Part 1)

How did the Dachau concentration camp change from 1933-45?

Lesson 5 overview



Hello. You're looking like a great historian today! In this 30 minute lesson you are going to;

5 a) Solve a puzzle of 3 camp descriptions (10 mins)

5 b) Start to use sources on the Nazi concentration camp website to create a timeline of Dachau (15 mins)

5 c) Take a multiple-choice quiz to see how your knowledge and understanding of Dachau is developing. (5 mins)



Key terms for this lesson

Term	Meaning
asocial	Someone seen as not 'fitting in' to 'normal' society
communist	An idea of abolishing differences in social class
D-Day	The June 6, 1944 invasion of Nazi-occupied Normandy
dilapidated	Run-down, not looked after
indoctrinate	Teach someone to believe something without questioning it
liberate	Set free
musselmänner	Prisoners who are sick and ill, known as 'the living dead'
Operation Barbarossa	The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, 22 nd June 1941
satellite camp	Where concentration camp inmates went to work
SS	A paramilitary organisation in charge of guarding the camps
Reichsbanner	A paramilitary, pro-democracy group

5 a) Comparing places puzzle



10 mins.



- 1) Read the next 3 slides. They are descriptions of 3 places, labelled A, B and C.

- 2) When you've finished, think about the following 3 questions;
 - What is each quote describing? Are they all describing the same thing, or are they describing different things?
 - How might you explain the similarities and differences between them?



Place A

‘It is a cold evening... the... prisoners are having bread, sausage and tea inside the former office of a dilapidated munitions plant... cordoned off from the rest of the deserted factory ground with its crumbling structure, broken concrete foundations, and derelict roads. In all, there are no more than 100 or 120 political prisoners... the guards were... amiable policeman, who chatted with the prisoners, handed out cigarettes, and even slept in the same building.’

What is being described? How can you tell?



Place B

‘Nearly four thousand men with cropped hair stand to attention in striped uniforms, dreading another day of forced labour. Except for a group of Czechs, virtually all the prisoners are German or Austrian, though their common language is often all they share; coloured triangles on their uniforms identify them as political prisoners, asocials, criminals, homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, or Jews.... Each of the thirty four purpose-built huts is around 110 yards long; the floors inside are gleaming and the bunks are meticulously made up. Escape is almost impossible...’

What is being described? How can you tell?



Place C

‘Later that afternoon, they come upon thirty two thousand survivors from many ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds, representing about thirty European nations. Some seem more dead than alive... Many more lie in overcrowded barracks, infested with dirt and disease... dead bodies, sprawled between barracks, dumped in ditches, stacked like logs by the camp’s crematorium...’

What is being described? How can you tell?

5 a) Comparing Places



The 3 quotes are all describing the **same** place, Dachau.

Each of them relates to a different point in time:

- Place A: 22 March 1933 (Slide 5)
- Place B: 31 August 1939 (Slide 6)
- Place C: 29 April 1945 (Slide 7)

In what ways do you think Dachau has changed over time?

Write down three changes you can identify.



5 a) Comparing Places

Can you find Dachau
On the map?

It was a concentration
camp near Munich in
southern Germany.

It was the only camp to
last from 1933-45: from
Hitler's rise to power to
the end of the Second
World War.



5 b) Creating a Dachau timeline



15 mins.



You are now going to start to create a timeline to show how Dachau changed over time, and start to think about why.

You will look at 3 sources this lesson that all reveal something about the camp. Each one has a card for you to complete, to help you identify some of the key features of the camp. Some prompts are given on the cards to help you identify the information to look for in each source.

5 b) Creating a Dachau timeline

The cards follow on the next 3 slides.

**003 – A Munich newspaper reports on the opening Of Dachau,
March 1933**



095 – A Nazi magazine reports on Dachau, 1936



**051 – Resistance report on the different Dachau prisoner
groups in 1937**



Himmler sets up Dachau



‘The first concentration camp will be opened’

Key Information	
Date	
Prisoner numbers	
Who was imprisoned?	
Camp conditions	What words are used to describe the ‘camp’ and ‘grounds’?
Explanations	Who was the camp built to imprison?
Broader context	Think about how long the Nazis have been in power for. Look at the date.

Nazi Propaganda



‘the typical face of a born criminal’

Key Information	
Date	
Prisoner numbers	
Who was imprisoned?	
Camp conditions	What words are used in the source that make Dachau sound like a pleasant place to stay?
Explanations	What has happened to political prisoners by this time? What kind of establishment is this article trying to portray Dachau as?
Broader context	

German prisoners

'marked by coloured strips'



Key Information	
Date	
Prisoner numbers	
Who was imprisoned?	
Camp conditions	
Explanations	What has happened to the number of different types of prisoners?
Broader context	What nationality are most of the prisoners at this point? Why do you think this is?

5 c) Reflection quiz



So what features about Dachau before the outbreak of war have you started to notice?

Answer the following 4 multiple choice questions to help identify some of the camp features you may have noticed.

5 c) Reflection quiz

Question 1

Dachau was set up on the 20th March, 1933 for the imprisonment of who?

- A. Jews**
- B. Political opponents**
- C. Criminals**
- D. Gypises**

5 c) Reflection quiz

Question 2

By 1936, there was little political resistance to the Nazis. Repression shifted more to which groups of people?

- A. Ordinary Germans**
- B. Criminals and 'asocials'**
- C. Jews**
- D. Homosexuals**

5 c) Reflection quiz

Question 3

In 1936 Nazi propaganda told ordinary Germans that the purpose of Dachau was for...

- A. Education
- B. Growing food
- C. Heavy labour
- D. Making armaments for war

5 c) Reflection quiz

Question 4

Dachau...

- A. Changed little over time
- B. Always had the same purpose, to persecute political prisoners
- C. Changed significantly over time
- D. Was shut down as soon as the political prisoners were released

5 c) Reflection quiz answers

1. B

2. B

3. A

4. C

End of short lesson 5

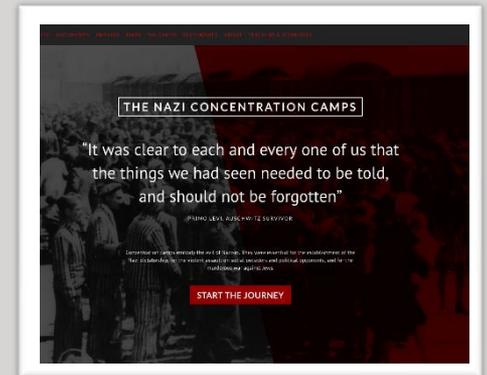
Well done!

You have now completed the fifth of six short lessons about the Nazi concentration camps.

We look forward to seeing you soon for lesson 6, where you will get to use the Nazi concentration camps website to identify what Dachau was and how it changed over time. You will also have a chance in the final quiz to reflect on some of the key things you have learnt about Nazi concentration camps over these six short lessons.

‘What was Dachau?’

How did the Dachau concentration camp change from 1933-45?



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