The Nazi regime 4: racialist beliefs; the persecution of minority groups and the Jews

By the end of this spread you should be able to describe:
1. the Nazi's ideas about race and citizenship
2. their treatment of the Jews and other minority groups

Racialist Ideas and Citizenship

Citizenship: The Nazis believed
1. Only those people who were members of the German race (Aryan) had the right to be citizens of Germany.
2. Jews, in particular, should be denied the right to vote and hold public office.

Nazi beliefs

Racism: The Nazis believed
1. The blonde-haired, blue-eyed Nordic Germans (or Aryans) were a Volk, or race.
2. They were the master race. All other, inferior races were arranged in a hierarchy beneath them.
3. Near the bottom of the hierarchy came black peoples, and beneath them 'non-people' such as gypsies and Jews.
4. It was their duty to keep the German race 'pure' by having children only with fellow Aryans.
5. Restricting what other races could do, especially the Jews.
6. It was their destiny to conquer the lands of inferior races, such as the Slavs to the east, and use them to provide resources and living space for the master race.

The persecution of minority groups

'Undesirables': The Nazis persecuted minority groups in Germany who refused to conform to what they believed threatened the 'purity' of the German race. As well as the Jews, these so-called 'undesirables' included:
1. homosexuals. Many were sent to concentration camps.
2. gypsies. German gypsies were rounded up and sent to concentration camps where many died.
3. the mentally ill. Many were sent to concentration camps.

The euthanasia programme 'Euthanasia' means 'a quiet and easy death'. In 1939 Hitler started a programme under this name to kill people with mental and physical disabilities who the Nazis judged to lead worthlesss lives at the expense of the State.

The persecution of the Jews

Propaganda
1. Hitler blamed the Jews for:
   a. Germany's defeat in 1918
   b. The inflation of 1923
   c. The economic collapse of 1929-1932.
2. In schools
   a. Children were taught in lessons to hate the Jews
   b. Textbooks put across anti-Semitic (anti-Jewish) ideas.

Emigration
1. Between 1933 and 1939 about half the population of Jews in Germany emigrated, mainly to Palestine, the USA, and Britain.
2. About 250,000, mostly the poorest, remained in Germany.

The attack on rights and freedoms, 1933-1939

1933
- Hitler orders boycott of Jewish shops and businesses. SA paint Jude (Jew) on windows and try to persuade public not to enter.
- Law to exclude Jews from Government jobs.
- Thousands of Jewish civil servants, lawyers, and university teachers sacked.

1934
- Local councils ban Jews from public spaces such as parks, playing fields, and swimming pools.

The 'Nuremberg Laws' passed, 15 September:
1. The Race Law on Citizenship: only those of German blood can be German citizens; deprives German Jews of citizenship and the right to vote and hold Government office.
2. Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour: forbids marriage or sexual relations between Jews and German citizens.

1935-7
- Professional activities of Jews banned or restricted - includes vets, dentists, accountants, surveyors, teachers, and nurses.

1936-7
- Qualifications of Jewish doctors cancelled.
- Jews with non-Jewish first names must add and use the name 'Israel' (for males) or 'Sarah' (for females).

1938
- Crystal Night (9 Nov). Following the murder by a Jew of a German diplomat in Paris, SA start three-day campaign to destroy Jewish shops, homes, and synagogues throughout Germany. About 90 killed and 20,000 arrested and put into concentration camps.
- Jewish children excluded from German schools and universities.

1939
- Jews no longer allowed to run shops and businesses.
- Jews forbidden to own radios and to buy cakes and chocolate.