Holocaust Memorial Day 2022

Slide 2:   Most of you will probably recognise the girl in this picture. Her name is Anne Frank. She was a German girl born in 1929, who moved to Amsterdam in the Netherlands as a child. Anne was a fun-loving and popular child and teenager, who enjoyed playing table tennis, reading and dreamed of becoming a Hollywood actress one day. Like many teenage girls, she enjoyed writing in her diary, and poured her heart and soul into her words. She was also Jewish. Sounds pretty normal, doesn't it? However, the fact that she was Jewish altered her life dramatically. When Anne was 11, Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands. Their hatred of Jewish people and belief that they belonged to an 'inferior' race that needed to be destroyed led to the murder of 6 million Jews like Anne. Anne died in 1945, aged just 15. It's very possible that without the Holocaust, she could be alive today.

Slide 3:   The Holocaust is one of the darkest chapters of human history. There had been prejudice against Jews (also called anti-semitism) for thousands of years in Europe. Jewish people had been blamed for many things throughout history, and by 1900 were mostly living in Eastern Europe. When the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, they believed strongly that German people (or Aryans) were the best and purest race, and wanted to get rid of everyone who didn't fit in with their idea of the 'perfect human race.' This included people who were gay, disabled, non-white and Jewish people.

Slide 3:   Once the Nazis were in power, they passed many laws that graudally stripped away the rights of Jewish citizens in Germany. These included not being able to use public swimming pools and theatres, having to send their children to different schools and forbidding Germans and Jews to get married. Many Jewish-owned shops were painted with the word 'Jude' (German for Jew) to warn people to not shop there. Later, all Jewish people had to wear a yellow star to help identify them. At the same time, the Nazis started a campaign of brainwashing the rest of the German population to also hate Jews.

Slide 4:   In the 1930s and 1940s, the Nazis began invading other parts of Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Netherlands and France. The invasion of Poland in 1939 caused WW2 to begin. Now there were millions more Jews living under Nazi control, and the Nazis

decided the best way to achieve their vision of the 'perfect racial society' was to kill all of the Jewish people. They set up extermination camps and they arrested and transported as many Jews as they could to these camps. The most famous is Auschwitz, which is in Poland, and pictured on the slides. Here, Jewish people (and some others who the Nazis hated) were either killed immediately by poisonous gas, or were put to work doing hard labour in brutal conditions. In total, 6 million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust, and many more who survived suffered horribly as well.

Slide 5: The 27th January is Holocaust Memorial Day, a day where we can remember and learn about this horrific event to both honour the lives of the victims, and to work towards ensuring it doesn't happen in the future. The theme of Holocaust Memorial Day this year is 'One Day', which encourages us to think about single moments or days in the Holocaust that are important. One event is Kristallnacht on 9th November 1938 (shown in the top left picture). This is when the Nazis encouraged the German population to attack Jewish property. On this single night, 91 Jews were murdered, 30,000 were arrested, over 7,000 Jewish businesses were destroyed and 267 synagogues were destroyed. This marks the start of the step-up of Nazi violence towards the Jews of Germany before the extermination camps.

Slide 5: Another key day was 27th January 1945 - the day which Holocaust Memorial Day is also remembered on. This was when Auschwitz, the largest extermination camp, was liberated by the Russian army. This happened when the Nazis were starting to lose WW2, and the Russians were advancing on Poland and freed the remaining prisoners in the camp. This is a significant 'one day' in the Holocaust, because it marks the beginning of the end of the murder of Europe's Jews.

Slide 6: So, why do we remember the Holocaust? There are hundreds of reasons why we remember it. Perhaps the most important one is to remember and honour the individual lives of people who suffered horribly under the Nazis. 6 million individuals like Anne Frank. Over the coming days, think about them, remember them, light a candle for them, and commit to being kinder, more tolerant and more respectful of human life than before.