



## ***Social Conformity Versus Free Thinking***

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Bailey Middle School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Seventh Grade Social Studies

**Keywords:** Novel study, group identity, hatred, fear, Nazis, Hitler, The Wave

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** For this unit students will be able to understand, and identify, when a charismatic, and maniacal, ruler may be trying to grab power. Our most comprehensive topic during the year is World War II. Before we dive into that topic we do cover the time period between the two World Wars, and we discuss the rise of dictators in Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union. While students tend to understand the underlying reasons these men were able to seize power in their respective countries, they do struggle with fully understanding how the masses could be so easily persuaded to follow and adore tyrants like Hitler or Stalin. In using the novel The Wave, by Todd Strasser, I can use the story in the book to help students understand how a group of people could be made to blindly follow someone.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 130 students in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies.*

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## **Social Conformity Versus Free Thinking**

**Michael Richards**

### **Rationale:**

Through our course of study we will cover many important events in World History, and for most of the students it is their first exposure to these topics. Students are asked to analyze very important, and very mature, topics about our past. While most students are excited to learn about these topics, they also struggle to understand how the atrocities of our past were allowed to happen. Often when teaching about the Holocaust the kids continue to ask why others did not step in and try to stop Hitler's Final Solution. They cannot grasp how one person can easily brainwash a large part of a population into allowing that person to do as they wish. This unit will give students a better understanding of how this could take place, while also giving them insight into what it was like in Nazi Germany as Hitler was rising to power. It will show them the different tactics that Nazis used to brainwash and strike fear into its population.

Our most comprehensive topic during the year is World War II. Before we dive into that topic we do cover the time period between the two World Wars, and we discuss the rise of dictators in Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union. While students tend to understand the underlying reasons these men were able to seize power in their respective countries, they do struggle with fully understanding how the masses could be so easily persuaded to follow and adore tyrants like Hitler or Stalin. In using the novel The Wave, by Todd Strasser, I can use the story in the book to help students understand how a group of people could be made to blindly follow someone. The story focuses around a real life experiment that took place in California. A history teacher was struggling to get his students to understand or grasp the idea of Hitler carrying out the Holocaust. They were struggling with the same type of questions and concerns that I see my own students struggle with when teaching the same exact topic.

After reading the novel I decided to experiment with one of the activities that Ben Ross used during his lessons. While introducing The Wave, a new group that Ross was forming out of his history classes, Ross wanted students to understand the importance of community and discipline. From the moment Ross began this introduction the students were hooked and the Wave only grew from there. I decided to try this same activity out on my own classes, with the goal being that we were trying to create the best students that Bailey Middle School had ever seen. It was amazing to see how much some students were getting into the activity. I was modeling how the perfect student would properly sit in their seats, ready to learn, and how to properly address the teacher when responding to a question. Students were into the mini-experiment I was trying to carry out in class. It

was at this point that I knew I wanted to teach this novel with my classes. I knew that with the proper preparation I could include a parallel between the story being told in the novel, and events that actually took place in Nazi Germany.

### **Background:**

In education the focus has been on literacy in the classroom. As a Social Studies teacher it not only my job to teach important historical events, people, and time periods, but also to teach students how to analyze important historical texts and think critically about the information being presented to them. My instruction often includes having students read and think critically using primary and secondary sources, in order to help them better understand the content being presented. I also try to incorporate a novel study for each school year as well. There is a value that can be placed on incorporating historical novels into our course of study because it allows students to learn history in a fun and interesting way.

Working for Bailey Middle School I am fortunate to have many resources available that allow me to further student learning in my classroom. Bailey was a B rated school based on test scores from the 2014-2015 school year, and for the second year in a row we have earned the title of Exceeding Growth. While we are a school in which 80% of our 7<sup>th</sup> graders are reading on or above grade level, we are always trying to push those numbers even higher<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, while it is my job to teach my students history, it is also important that I continue to push literacy on my students.

Bailey has a very large population for a middle school with 1,574 students enrolled. The school is located in an affluent area, where we have a strong parent population that attributes to the school's success each year. Our free and reduced lunch population at Bailey is about 24% which is much lower than the district average of about 51%. The make-up of our student population is as follows: 77% Caucasian, 8% Hispanic, 10% African American, 2% Asia, and 3% is a combination of two or more races<sup>2</sup>.

My school is also unique in the fact that it is a part of our district's One-to-One initiative. The plan is to provide each student within the school access to a Chromebook laptop while in class. This gives teachers the ability to make their lessons more interactive and enjoyable for the students. By having Chromebooks in the classroom I have been able to utilize more of the education programs that are available to educators. By making our lessons and activities digital students tend to be more engaged in the content being presented and will also take more away from the lesson as well. This is just one of the many resources that Bailey provides to help teachers reach their students in the classroom.

Despite Bailey's consistent success compared to state standards in test grades and growth, we are always looking for ways to improve. This year at Bailey we have included

in our schedule a twenty-five minute period, known as Bronco Block, for both enrichment and remediation. Teacher's see one of their four classes during this time each day. Students work on digital lessons through Compass Learning in both reading and math during this time. Students are also given D.E.A.R time, as a way to help improve their reading abilities. This is also an opportunity for teachers to pull aside students who are struggling to help them get caught up or better understand content being covered. The goal of Bronco Block is to give teachers time they do not have in class to concentrate on the students who are struggling, while at the same time helping to enrich the students who are already performing at a high level.

Bailey's mission is not to just help students recognize and achieve their academic goals, but we also realize that we are grooming the future leaders of our society. Therefore, it is important that students recognize the qualities of effective and influential leaders. At Bailey we are starting the "Leader in Me" program which is meant to teach students how to develop the qualities that will make them effective leaders of the next generation. The program centers around the idea of the 7 Habits of highly effective teens, which include being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, putting first things first, thinking win-win, seeking first to understand then to be understood, synergizing, and sharpening the saw. The idea is to embed these habits in our students now so that they will be highly effective individuals once they move on from their educational experience. It is a great program that my school is just starting this year, and we hope it will continue to grow within the culture of the school as the year goes on.

### **Standards:**

Working as a teacher in North Carolina means that we follow two sets of standards when putting together our instructional lessons. I follow the North Carolina Essential Learning Standard for 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies, as well as the Common Core Standards in all of my instructional practices. Standards that will be followed during this unit are provided below.

The North Carolina teaching standards that are implemented in this unit are as follows:

- Use historical thinking to analyze various modern societies
- Understand the development of government in modern societies and regions.
- Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups, and political entities in modern societies and regions.

The common core standards being implemented in this unit are as follows:

- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

### **Content:**

Even though this is a novel study, I plan on also incorporating the teaching of history content as we move through the story of The Wave. The story allows for me to also parallel historical events that will help explain the rise of the Nazis and Hitler, as well as the tactics used by the Fascist government to brainwash and strike fear into the German population. Listed below is some of the content that will be used in the unit and the basic outline of its importance in understanding the purpose of this unit.

#### Treaty of Versailles

After World War I there was the question as to establishing peace after the most destructive war in human history. How could nations that share borders go from attempted annihilation to sudden peace and harmony? This was the task presented to the Big Four, the leaders of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy.

And perhaps many contemporary democracies contain seeds of discontent comparable to those that made Germany susceptible to Nazism. But, of course, it was *war*- World War I and the oppressive peace that followed it- that tipped the balance and opened the political door to Hitler. War begets war. With all the explanations, it is still baffling and chilling to think how a nation so advanced in literature, philosophy, art, music, religious thought, and industry could accept National Socialism.<sup>3</sup>

These men ultimately failed at producing long lasting peace because their ideas of peace were somewhat different. President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points as a way of peaceful reconciliation with the German state. But the leaders of Great Britain and France, who had seen an entire generation lost during World War I, were bent on revenge toward the Germans. Those same nationalist and militarist feelings that caused this Great War, also played a part in attempted peace after the war as well.

Little did these men know but ink drafting that final edition of the Treaty of Versailles in June of 1919, they were not bringing lasting peace but instead setting in motion events that would lead to a second global war. The overall purpose of the

provisions set forth in the Treaty of Versailles were meant to punish Germany for its role in the outbreak of World War I. The architects of Versailles erred in letting their passions get in the way of rational politics, an error manifested in the 'war guilt' clause and the unwieldy reparations scheme.<sup>4</sup>

It is the reparations that were placed on Germany that truly brought about the conditions necessary for the rise of both Hitler and the Nazi Party in the 1930's. The German economy was unable to sustain the burden brought about by the reparations, or having to pay the bill for the expenses of the Great War. These reparations put a strain on a government that was trying to rebuild after the fall of the previous regime, and a country that was trying to move forward from the effects of such a costly and disastrous war. In fact between 1925 and 1930, the German economy was deprived of between one and 2.2 billion Reichsmark(RM) annually, which amounted in the late 1920's to nearly 2.5 per cent of Germany's GDP.<sup>5</sup> This financial loss coupled with the Great Depression of world markets at the end of the 1920's helped to foster an environment of desperation, and that desperation was exactly what the Nazis preyed on.

The Treaty of Versailles did not just have an economic effect, but it also had psychological effects on the German populace. The mechanism of accountability set out in Versailles did not foster feelings of guilt and shame among the vanquished about Germany's role in precipitating the war; instead, feeling victimized at Versailles, Germans became pre-occupied with expressing their rejection of the peace.<sup>6</sup> This was a common feeling amongst all Germans after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, and that feeling was shared by Adolf Hitler himself. He even publishes his resentment toward the treaty in his book *Mein Kampf*. The victimizers had become the victims, and that feeling of victimization felt amongst the German populace helped to cause a desire or longing for Germany's return to an elite status in the international world. Hitler preyed upon this feeling as well, promising to return to Germany to its former glory that was lost after World War I and through the requirements of the Treaty of Versailles. Everything that Hitler did leading up to the German invasion of Poland in 1939, was meant to show total and complete resistance towards the terms set forth in the Versailles Treaty. Without the failed attempt at peace after World War I there would not have been a platform for a man like Hitler and the Nazis to gain political power.

### Group Identity

As the World Depression began setting in by 1929, there was no country that was unaffected. Germany was no exception, and with the depression setting in and coupled with the large expense of the reparations one-third of all males were unemployed by January 1933.<sup>7</sup> These economic troubles led to a sense of desperation and uncertainty amongst the German citizens, and this created a power struggle amongst political parties in Germany during the early 1930's. One of those political parties was the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler. Hitler played on the

environment of desperation, and made promises to the German people that their suffering would end once the Nazis had political control of the country. He promised the people exactly what they wanted to hear, that he could return Germany to its former glory and status in the international world. By 1932 the Nazi Party was the largest political party in Germany, and during the elections they received the higher percentage of votes than any political party before it during the time of the Weimar Republic.<sup>8</sup> With that outcome, Hitler and the Nazis took a stranglehold over political power in Germany.

Once Hitler and the Nazis had power in Germany there was no letting go of it, and this new regime was met with a ton of enthusiasm from the German people. The hardships that they had faced during the reign of the Weimar Republic caused for them to be receptive of change, even in the form of totalitarianism. Most German citizens had grown to despise democracy because of the chaos that it had caused in Germany, as well the sense of disunity that it brought to the country. By the time the Nazis came to power, most of the German masses held a strong distrust in capitalism and a desire to return to folk community.<sup>9</sup> The Nazis used this desire to their advantage and attempted to create a sense of community amongst the German people Nazi leadership made every effort to establish social and emotional bonds with the masses and promote the ideal of Volksgemeinschaft or folk community.<sup>10</sup> The Nazis attempted to create this sense of community in many different ways, but it really started with Hitler himself.

During the early stages of his reign, Hitler had gained large popularity through Germany. Hitler had a very charismatic personality, and this appealed to the German population because they saw in him someone that could both identify with and glorify.<sup>11</sup> Hitler had been born from a poor background, but was able to find success in his lifetime and hold a position of power in Germany. People looked up to Hitler because they saw a war hero who had served in battle and been injured during World War I. They were also drawn to him because of his devotion to his work and his country, Germany. Hitler refused to get married because in his mind the only thing he should be married to is the state. He did not partake in things that would claim weaker men, such as alcohol or tobacco. Hitler tried to create the image of a “selfless ruler who governed only for the good of the folk community.”<sup>12</sup> The image was one that the Germans loved and accepted, and Hitler used his popularity to mask his real plans.

Since Hitler had the admiration of a large percentage of the German population it made it easier for them to create this sense of community. In community-like settings, altruism reduces violence; shrinking in upon itself, it tends to justify and support violence across state or national lines.<sup>13</sup> The Nazis used many different tactics to accomplish this. From state created holidays to large festivals and rallies, the Nazis employed different tactics to try to make the German people feel a sense of strength and community if they followed the Nazi regime. The themes of these festivals usually included both Hitler worship and national unity.<sup>14</sup>

The desire *to see*, to observe a spectacle, is not only an invitation to escape, it is also an urge to be part of dramatic events... The spectacle takes us away from our routines. For at least a time, we feel part of something big, colorful, exciting.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps there is no better example of this than when the Nazis would arrange party rallies in Nuremberg. These rallies were held under the cover of night and the use of large spotlights made it look as though the rallies were being held in a Cathedral of Lights. These rallies were meant to show the return to prominence and strength of the German state brought about by the Nazis, but it was also meant to create that feeling of community or acceptance within a group through pageantry. The Nazi swastika could be seen everywhere, from the uniforms of the military to the three ten-story banners hanging from a colonnade that stood 80 feet high and stretched across an impressive 1300 feet.<sup>16</sup> The swastika provided the German people with a symbol to rally behind. The use of symbols allows people to stand behind something they believe in, so the use of symbols can play an important role in uniting people together.

[W]ar reduces egoism and inclines people to sacrifice property, time, ease, and even life itself to a large whole, the common weal.<sup>17</sup> This was the purpose of Hitler's attempts to create a community atmosphere throughout Germany. Through these nationalistic feelings Hitler knew that it would provide him with the curtain needed to carry out his grand plans of conquest and genocide. In order to fulfill his master plan he needed the people of Germany to be willing to follow him blindly, no matter where that path may have led them. Hitler was not only strategic in gaining political power through the desperation of the times, but was also a master of playing on the desire of the people to have that sense of unity and importance lost during the Weimar Republic.

## Fear

While the people of Germany longed for a sense of national unity and the Nazis were willing to provide it for them there were still those that were not allowed to join the group. Even Hitler knew the importance of rebuilding Germany and creating a sense of unity, but he knew that the newly constructed German community would not include everyone; that there would be those that would be excluded. According to Hitler "those who threatened the 'body of the people' had to be ruthlessly excluded."<sup>18</sup> For the Nazis rebuilding Germany and restoring it to power meant cleansing it of those who were pulling it down. The three groups that were targeted by this policy were political opponents, social outcasts, and racial aliens.<sup>19</sup> In order to accomplish this policy of exclusion, Hitler created his own secret police, known as the Gestapo, and elite soldiers, known as the SS or Stormtroopers. These two groups would play a large role in helping the Nazis carry out their policy of exclusion.

From the moment the Nazis came to power in Germany they were looking to begin their cleansing of the German population. This caused for the creation of two groups that would be responsible for carrying out the Nazi expulsion plans. The Gestapo became



known as the political police. They were a separate group from that of normal law enforcement in Germany. They were responsible for locating and detaining those that were considered political opponents, especially those that were considering to be Communists. The Nazis had a great fear of the Communists and the threat of them gaining popularity and overthrowing the Third Reich. In 1933, when the Nazis came to power, they made sure to round up as many of the political opponents that they could find. This led to the creation of the first concentration camps, which were meant to serve as detention centers for both political enemies and social outcasts. The Gestapo were right in the middle of this round up of these individuals. The Gestapo were given their marching orders and then given free range to try to locate individuals that would be threats to Nazi power. Even though the Gestapo had a strong presence during the Nazi regime, Germany never became an actual police state because it was not just the police that played a role in the exclusion process.<sup>20</sup> The Gestapo became the first symbol of fear or source of scare tactics used by the Hitler and the Nazis.

Even more powerful and influential during the rise of the Nazis in Germany were the SS, or Stormtroopers. These were Hitler's elite soldiers, and the man who ultimately was tasked with being in charge of the SS was a man by the name of Heinrich Himmler. Hitler tended to favor Himmler because they were both very enthusiastic about the need for cleansing German society or order to rebuild a stronger German state. This is shown through his appointment as the leader of the group that played the largest role in helping to carry out these plans. These elite forces became the true symbol for Nazi force and aggression. The concentration camp, and later death camp, system was set up and run by the SS forces.

The use of fear during the Nazi regime was quite evident, and there were groups that were formed in order to help carry out the plans of the Nazis. In order to create a new Germany they knew they had to get people to conform, and the easiest way to do this is to scare people. From the very moment that they can seized political power they put their plans into motion. The Nazis wanted to give the German people the sense of community that they had been longing for, but that community could only include certain individuals and the rest needed to be taken care of. The use of fear and repression was a strong ally that the Nazis used to their advantage.

### Propaganda/ Censorship

While the Nazis relied on creating a folk community and using fear to keep the German people in line, they also relied greatly on another tool to help brainwash the German people and that was propaganda. When in the wrong hands propaganda can easily be used to carry out plans of evil and hatred. The Third Reich understood the power of propaganda, and the German people were exposed to many different type of propaganda meant to make Hitler and the Nazis seem like saviors. They also used propaganda to create a feeling of hatred especially towards the Jews living in Germany. Propaganda can

be a power tool when in the hands of the wrong people, and the Nazis are a perfect example of this.

The Nazis used many different techniques to portray Hitler and the Nazis in a positive image to the German population. Hitler even outlines the importance of propaganda and how to effectively use it in his book *Mein Kampf*. Images portrayed Hitler as being a savior, sometimes portraying him as being a “white knight” that rode in on his horse to save the German people from the chaos that the Weimar Republic had caused. Everything the Nazis did was meant to show an image of strength and power. Even the architecture in Nazi Germany had a purpose. The architecture was meant to be large, in order to show a presence of power and strength. So propaganda to the Nazis wasn’t just about images and videos, but the Nazis tried to make sure that everything people were exposed to in Germany showed the Nazis in a positive yet powerful image.

Another focus of Nazi propaganda was to dehumanize the Jews living in Germany. Images, school lessons, movies, book burnings, board games, and children’s books were all meant to make the Jews seem less than human. These images were meant to make the German people despise the Jews. Hatred is often induced by war and sustained in civilian populations by propaganda and patriotic fervor.<sup>21</sup> The Nazis wanted the German people to think that the Jews were inferior, that they were basically less than human. They especially focused on teaching the youth of Germany to hate the Jews as well. Students were taught in school that there was nothing worse than being a Jew. They were taught that the Jews were people to be hated through lessons at school, children’s books like the *Poison Mushroom*, and board games like *Jews Get Out*. Movies that came out in Germany at the time always included villains that were Jewish. “Group polarization”; we tend to believe those with whom we somehow identify and disbelieve or distrust those who belong to a different group.<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, it was the Jews who were being identified as the “other” and the plan was to have them eradicated from the German population. There was a focus on trying to create an image of the Jews that was not favorable, but in order to coordinate all of this there had to be people focused on this making this message reach the German population.

In the contemporary world, war demands a justification in terms of national interests, and the engagement of young people in armed conflict requires a devotion to patriotism.<sup>23</sup>

Hitler knew that it would be hard to convince the entire German population to follow the Nazis and share in their plans. Perhaps that is why Hitler and the Nazis put a lot of time and energy into controlling the youth in Germany. Hitler knew that if he could control the youth of Germany that he would control the future of their country. Youth groups such as the Hitler Youth were formed with the purpose of turning the youth of Germany into good Nazis. They were basically training programs meant to brainwash the youth into following the Nazis and making sure that their purpose lives on for generations. The plan

did work because young Germans do play a part in helping the Nazis carry out their plans. Many of them would single out people that were not following or doing what the Nazis wanted. They essentially became tattle-tales for the Nazi regime.

The Nazis focused their efforts on this through the creation of their own government agency called the Ministry of Propaganda. The man who outlines and put into action this “attack” through propaganda was Joseph Goebbels. It is this group that organized the book burnings and created the images that the German people were exposed to. It is also helped that Nazism focused on controlling the media and all other forms of communicating with the people. Censorship plays a role in allowing the Nazis to accomplish their goals. By censoring and controlling everything that the people of Germany were exposed to made it easier for the Nazis to accomplish their goal of creating an environment of hatred towards the Jews and love for Hitler and the Nazis. Needless to say, propaganda and censorship were two powerful tools that the Nazis tried to use to their advantage.

## Hatred

When, within a society or nation, the group perceived as different begins to thrive economically, hatred may be increased by envy.<sup>24</sup> Discussions have always focused on Hitler and his treatment of the Jews before and during World War II. There are those who have questioned and tried to understand the roots of Hitler’s hatred of the Jews. There are those who believe that experiences in his early life helped to foster this hatred that Hitler had for the Jews. There are two possible reasons as to why Hitler had grown to hate the Jews. Hitler came from an interesting family. His father was an abusive alcoholic who was always very hard on Hitler, and often was unhappy with his passion for art. Due to the strained relationship that he had with his father, he became very close to his mother. When his mother became ill and passed away, Hitler blamed her doctor, who was Jewish, for her untimely death.

Hitler also had a strong passion for art, and his mother supported this passion while his father did not. He had such a strong passion for art that he actually wanted to make a career out of it. Just like an aspiring artist, Hitler was attempting to get into a very prestigious art school in Austria when he was a young man. Hitler was rejected by the art school. Unwilling to believe that it was not a lack of talent that led to the rejection, Hitler believed it came down to the vote of a professor, who was Jewish, that caused for him to be rejected by the school. These two experiences in his life are usually considered to be the ultimate reasons for his hatred of the Jews. The death of his mother coupled with the rejection to the art school put Hitler on a path to becoming one of the most notorious historical figures.

## Resistance

While there are many who followed the Nazis simply because they believed in them or out of fear, there were those who tried to resist what the Nazis were doing in Germany. As time moved on the Nazis began to start their plans to single out and destroy the Jewish population in Germany, and later the rest of Europe. While the Nazis were successful in being able to brainwash a large portion of their population, especially the youth, there was still a percentage of the population that did not agree with the actions of the Nazi regime. However, due to fear of punishment, many of them did not openly voice their displeasure with the actions of the Nazis. Instead many of them attempted to hide friends or neighbors that were Jewish from being taken by the Nazis.

It is one thing to use nonviolent methods against those who would deprive you of some material benefit, but if their basic aim is to deprive you of life itself, how can you resist nonviolently?<sup>25</sup> This is an important part of the story because most people tend to believe that everyone in Germany were fine with what the Nazis were doing. It is impressive, and something that should be celebrated amongst a story of violence and death. The Jews were convinced that their faith would save them. They waited for God to alter their fate, and put an end to the punishment being inflicted by the Nazis. However, there were those who were willing to act in order to stand up to the Nazis. Pacifism had failed in the form of appeasement before World War II. Pacifism would have failed the Jews had they continued accepting the actions of the Nazis, and thankfully there were those that were willing to put their lives on the line in order to help those that were targets of the Nazi regime. Therefore, it is important that when studying this part of history, it is important to be exposed to stories that show that not everyone had bought in to what the Nazis were trying to accomplish.

### **Teaching Strategies:**

#### Class Discussions

During this unit students will be asked to discuss some mature topics. We will discuss the role that group identity plays in our society. We will look at some of the positives and negatives of group identity. However, we will also be discussing the importance of knowing who we are. Yes, it is good to be a part of groups in society, but we must not forget who we are as individuals. It will be interesting to hear the opinions of 7<sup>th</sup> graders, who are struggling to define themselves as individuals, with this topic.

#### Group Work

Group collaboration is always key to student understanding of topics. There will be parts of this unit where students are expected to work with their peers to complete activities. It is through collaboration and discussions with their peers that students will be able to answer the challenging questions that this topic will pose for them.

Think. Pair. Share.

With this strategy students will have a chance to first reflect on questions presented to them on their own. From there they will then discuss this opinion with a partner and this will cause them to consider different points of view and perhaps even revise their own opinion. After sharing with a partner, students will then come together as a class to discuss their views and opinions. This strategy should lead to some healthy discussion on these topics as an entire class. Students will have the ability to share their view and defend it.

Paired Reading

During the novel study there will be times where we are reading the chapters as an entire group, but there will also times when students will read with a partner. This allows them to read out loud to each other, and work through confusing areas on their own. This also allows them to read at their own speed, without having to worry about keeping up with the entire group.

Talk to the Text

During this unit students will also be analyzing primary and secondary sources to gather a better understanding of the Nazi take over in Germany during the 1930's. Talk to the Text is a great strategy to help students come to a better understanding of what the passage is trying to tell them. This strategy has students annotating the text for better comprehension of what the text is referring to. This strategy is especially useful for Social Studies because it is important for students to understand and decipher the complex language used in most historical documents. Once students work through the "road blocks" that these texts can provide, comprehension of the text will be mastered.

Close Reading

Using close reading strategies in this unit will allow students the ability to comprehend the texts that they will be analyzing. Close reading strategies will allow them to decipher the vocabulary within a text that may be challenging for them. It will also force them to seek the definition of those words, and come to an understanding of their purpose in the text. Through use of these strategies students will learn to analyze text at a deeper level and come to a better understanding of the text overall.

**Classroom Activities:**

On the first day of this unit, classes will start with a simulation activity to introduce the novel to the students. For the simulation activity the teacher will try to mirror the same introduction activity that is used by Ben Ross in the novel. Students will come into class

and take their assigned seats. The teacher will then start by saying that the goals for class are changing. It will be explained to students that no longer are they simply going to learn about World History, but they are going to try to become the best students that Bailey Middle School has ever had. The teacher will then go on to explain that the only way to achieve this goal is by learning the importance of discipline and community. The teacher will then demonstrate for the students the proper posture when sitting at their desks. The teacher will also show them the proper way to answer questions when called upon in class, by standing next to their desks and starting their answer by addressing the teacher by name. The teacher will then demonstrate with some of the students in the class. The teacher will then introduce the name of the new group that they will all be affiliated with, known as The Wave. In the end, the students should think that their teacher is starting a group known as The Wave, and through discipline and community students who are a part of this group will be the best students their school has ever seen. This will give students an understanding of the sense of community that the Nazis tried to create when they came to power in 1933.

The teacher will use this simulation activity to introduce the novel study on the book The Wave, by Todd Strasser. In order to give the students a better understanding of what the novel will be about the teacher will then show a book trailer.<sup>26</sup> Students will then be asked to construct a KWL chart on the next page of their interactive notebook. After the teacher explains that the novel study will parallel a study on Hitler and the Nazis the students will be asked to complete the K and W columns of their charts. In the first column they will write down what they already know about Hitler and the Nazis. For the W column students will include information on what they are curious about or what to learn about for this topic. Classes will then read the first two chapters of the novel with the teacher choosing volunteers to read sections of these two chapters.

For the second day, classes will start by first reviewing what was covered in the first two chapters of the novel. Classes will then read both Chapters 3 and 4. Since we are still at the beginning of the novel these chapters will be read together as a whole class using the concept of popcorn reading where the last person to read will then choose the next person in the class to carry on where they left off. The teacher will stop and highlight different sections that are important to the story. Students will then work on their own to complete a character sketch of one of the characters from the story that we have been introduced to. The students will be responsible for locating where the author describes the character and sketching what that character would possibly look like and the type of clothes they would wear. Then the students must also pull two examples from the novel of something that their character would think and say. To hold students accountable they must also provide the page number where they found their information. Students will then complete some reflection questions based on the first four chapters to help summarize where we are in the story so far.

For the third day, classes will start by first reviewing what was covered in the chapters read the previous day. Students will then be allowed to pair up and read chapters five and six. Students will then be asked to brainstorm the characteristics of a group, as well as positive and negative effects of identifying with a group, and examples of groups in society today. Students will first do this on their own then they will share their ideas with their partner from earlier in class. As a partnership they revise their lists. Once they have been given time to review with their partner, the teacher will then allow for students to share. As a class, we will develop our own definition or understanding of what a group is. This definition will be written in front of the class by the teacher. The class will then come up with both positive and negative impacts of groups, which the teacher will also present in front of the class. After sharing examples of groups that exist today, the teacher will then lead the class in a discussion centered on the question: do groups have a positive or negative impact on our society?

For the fourth day, classes will first review information covered in the chapters read in the previous class. Class will then read chapters seven and eight as a whole group. The teacher will stop to highlight important sections of the chapters. Students will then be asked to discuss among their tables and come up with a definition of fear. Groups will also be asked to come up with reasons why fear can be an important tool for a ruler. The teacher will lead the class in a discussion about the use of fear to control a group of people or country. As a connection to the use of fear in the novel to silence the critiques of *The Wave*, students will be introduced to the use of fear in Nazi Germany through the use of secret police and elite forces. Through images and direct instruction students will understand the role of these groups in Nazi Germany. Groups will then be asked to create their own group of secret police. Groups must come up with a name for their secret police and a symbol. Groups will also be asked to complete other tasks, such as an application for membership in their secret police, a list of crimes that citizens could be arrested for, and a separate list of punishments should citizens be arrested by the secret police. Groups will present their ideas to the rest of the class, and groups will be encouraged to create propaganda or posters for their presentation. Classes will vote on which secret police they believe would be the most effective in striking fear into a population. Students will also be given review questions, to complete for homework, based on chapter five through eight in order to summarize the story to this point.

For the fifth day, classes will start by reviewing what happened in chapters read the day before. Class will then read chapter nine and ten together as a class. Once reading is complete the teacher will review the purpose of advertising. Students will then work with their groups to come up with examples of advertisements that they see every day. From here the teacher will introduce the idea of propaganda. All children should be helped to understand the power of propaganda and the need to think critically about social/political issues.<sup>27</sup> The teacher will use a PowerPoint presentation to show students examples of propaganda that were used by the Nazis in Germany. As the teacher displays the propaganda students will come up with the purpose of each piece of propaganda. The

teacher will also show a video of a Nazi book burning, and a speech given by Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda.<sup>28</sup> Through the words of Goebbels the students will come to a better understanding of the purpose of these book burnings.

Through this instruction the teacher will explain how propaganda was used by the Nazis to make the German people accept them and Hitler. The teacher will discuss different examples of propaganda utilized by the Nazis, such as images, book burnings, architecture, and party rallies. Students will then be given time to construct their own examples of propaganda that could be used in the novel by the members of The Wave. Students will be asked to bring in different type of magazines for the next day's activity.

For the sixth day, classes will start by reviewing the information read in the previous day's reading. Class will then read chapters eleven and twelve as a whole group. The teacher will stop to highlight important parts of the story. Students will use the magazines that were brought into class to construct a collage of images and phrases that explain who they are as a person. Students will be creating their own collage, but they can discuss with each other what images work best for them. Sometimes it is important for them to ask others how they perceive them in order for them to truly understand themselves. Students will be allowed to present their collages to the rest of the class and explain how it represents them. The world needs critical education aimed at knowledge of both self and the groups to which one belongs.<sup>29</sup> This activity is meant to explain to the students that it is important to understand themselves in order to avoid being brainwashed into following a group like the Nazis. For homework, students will also be expected to complete review questions on chapters nine through twelve to summarize the story so far.

For the seventh day, classes will first review what was read in the previous day's lesson. Classes will then read chapter 13 and 14 as a class. Teacher will stop to review important sections of the story. Just as individuals in the story were being singled out by the group of students that made up The Wave, the teacher will focus today's lesson on the hatred that was directed at the Jews in Germany. Students will be exposed, through the use of a PowerPoint presentation and direct instruction, to different example of propaganda that was used to dehumanize the Jews in Germany, such as images, children's books, board games, and school lessons. The teacher will also identify and explain the different laws that were put into place, such as the Nuremberg Laws, meant to single-out and identify Jews that were living in Germany. Students will be shown images from Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, which was a coordinated attack on Jews living in Germany. Students will then analyze some primary sources from those that were targeted by the Nazis. Students will be expected to Talk-To-The-Text, or annotate the text, and answer some guiding questions to give them a better understanding of what it was like to be targeted by the Nazis.

For the eighth day, classes will first review what was read in the previous day's chapters. Students will then read chapter 15 with a partner. Once completed with the



reading the teacher will explain to the students that just like in the novel there were those who resisted the Nazis and what they were doing to certain groups, especially the Jews. Students will be exposed to stories of resistance through both videos and primary sources. Students will then be asked to pretend they were one of the individuals that were helping Jews in Germany, They will then be asked to complete three journal entries from that perspective. In those journal entries students will be asked to include their motivations for helping the Jews, how they would help them (remind students that physical resistance would result in punishment), and any challenges that they may face in completing their goals.

For the ninth day, classes will review the entire story up this point as classes prepare to finish the last two chapters of the novel. Classes will read chapters sixteen and seventeen as a class with the teacher stopping to highlight important sections of the story. Students will then complete their last set of review questions for the final chapters of the story. Once students have completed these questions, students will then be asked to construct a virtual mind map consisting of the different themes that arose throughout our novel. Part of the mind map would be to identify themes of the story, but also explain how they relate to their life. Examples of themes that can be used for this activity are peer pressure, group vs. individual identity, resistance, and conformity. Students must then explain how this relates to their life or to society in general, students can do this through explanation, examples, images and videos.

For the final three days of the unit, the teacher will start by introducing the culminating activity for the novel study. Students will be working in groups to construct a campaign for peace in society.

It should be unproblematic to present material on pacifism or peace movements as history in our schools, and yet it is rarely done as part of history or social studies courses. Indeed, although material on peace education has proliferated, little has been done with it in schools.<sup>30</sup>

Using examples of hatred and violence, such as the terrorist attacks in Paris and New York on September 11th, the students can also make connections to our civilization today. Students will be expected to create slogans, posters, speeches, petitions, and advertisements calling for an end to hatred and violence in our world today. Students are encouraged to be creative and to include other ideas in their campaign to help get their point across. Students will be reminded not to ignore the world of social media, and perhaps develop hashtags or other social media activities, like the ice bucket challenge, to raise awareness for their campaign. Students will be given two days in class to work on and put together their campaigns. On the last day groups will present their campaign to the entire class. While presentations are occurring, the rest of the students will be grading their peers on creativity and persuasiveness. The teacher will use these peer evaluations as part of the groups' overall grade on the culminating activity. Students will then be

asked to refer back to the KWL chart in their notebooks that they had created at the beginning of this unit. Students will be asked to complete the last column where they will include the new information that they have learned about Hitler and the Nazis and their reign in Germany. Students will then be asked to turn in their KWL charts. While exit tickets will be used as a daily source of data, the teacher can use the KWL chart to analyze how much the students have internalized through this unit.

## **Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards**

### Common Core Standards

In this unit will be using standard RH.6-8.1 by analyzing primary source documents and citing evidence from the text. Students will use this to come to a better understanding of the Nazis and the environment that they had created in German once they came to power.

This unit will also focus on standard RH.6-8.2 in which students will use certain reading strategies to help them come to a better understanding of the information within those documents. Students will then be expected to show understanding of the information being presented to them by formulated concise responses to discussion questions.

This unit will also focus on standard RH.6-8.4 in which students will perform reading strategies that cause them to identify key vocabulary within a text. Students will be expected to come to a better understanding of the meaning of these words. Therefore, giving them a better understanding of the text in general.

## Annotated Bibliography

“ACCOUNTABILITY AND TESTING RESULTS.” *Accountability Services*. Accessed October 31, 2015. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/>. This website gives people a look at the test results of school in North Carolina.

Arquilla, John, and Ryan Nomura. 2015. "Three Wars of Ideas about the Idea of War." *Comparative Strategy* 34, no. 2: 185-201. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed June 11, 2015). This resource was accessed, but it was not utilized.

“Bailey Middle School.” *Cornelius NC*. Accessed October 31, 2015. <http://www.carolinaschoolhub.com/bailey-middle-school-cornelius-nc.cfm>. This website gives people a better understanding of the demographics of schools in North Carolina.

“Book Burning Historical Film Footage.” *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*. United States Holocaust Memorial Council. Accessed November 23, 2015. [http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media\\_fi.php?moduleid=10005852&mediaid=158](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_fi.php?moduleid=10005852&mediaid=158). This video shows students an example of a book burning held by the Nazis at a German university. It also includes a speech from Joseph Goebbels which will give the students a better understanding of the purpose of the book burnings.

BRANAGAN, MARTY. 2014. "Nonviolent Resistance to Nazi Germany: What occurred and what could have occurred." *Social Alternatives* 33, no. 4: 31-38. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed June 11, 2015). This resource was accessed, but it was not utilized.

Connor, John W. “From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult.” *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989): 259–88. doi:10.1525/eth.1989.17.3.02a00010. This academic journal article gives its reader good insight into the tactics that the Nazis used to create a bond amongst the German population.

Noddings, Nel. *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. This book is meant to give people a better understanding of the different reasons why our society accepts war and violence. It also attempts to give educators advice on how to promote peace to our nation’s youth.

Strobl, Gerwin. “Staging The Nazi Assault on Reason: Hanns Johst's Schlageter and The.” *NTQ New Theatre Quarterly* 21.04 (2005): 307. Web. This resource was accessed, but it was not utilized.

“The Wave - Todd Strasser Preview Book Trailer.” *YouTube*. YouTube. Accessed October 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=es4iy5i1cug>. This video can be used to give students a better understanding as to what their novel will be about.

Wachsmann, Nikolaus. "The policy of exclusion: repression in the Nazi state, 1933–1939." *Nazi Germany* (2008): 122-45. This academic journal article gives good insight into the use of secret police and elite forces to create an environment of fear in Germany. That fear would keep those who disagreed with the Nazis repressed.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> “ACCOUNTABILITY AND TESTING RESULTS.” *Accountability Services*. Accessed October 31, 2015. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/>.

<sup>2</sup> “Bailey Middle School.”, *Cornelius NC*. Accessed October 31, 2015. <http://www.carolinaschoolhub.com/bailey-middle-school-cornelius-nc.cfm>.

<sup>3</sup> Noddings, Nel. *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012: 8-9

<sup>4</sup> Lu, Catherine. 2008. "Shame, Guilt and Reconciliation after War". *European Journal of Social Theory*. 11 (3): 375

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<sup>6</sup> Lu, Catherine. 2008. "Shame, Guilt and Reconciliation after War". *European Journal of Social Theory*. 11 (3):376

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<sup>8</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989): 268

<sup>9</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989):269

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<sup>11</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989):273

<sup>12</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989):273

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<sup>14</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989):270

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- <sup>16</sup> Connor, John W. "From Ghost Dance To Death Camps: Nazi Germany as a Crisis Cult." *Ethos* 17, no. 3 (1989):270
- <sup>17</sup> G. Stanley Hall reading from last seminar
- <sup>18</sup> Wachsmann, Nikolaus. "The policy of exclusion: repression in the Nazi state, 1933–1939." *Nazi Germany* (2008): 122
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- <sup>26</sup> The Wave - Todd Strasser Preview Book Trailer." *YouTube*. YouTube. Accessed October 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=es4iy5i1cug>
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