

Vocabulary Worksheet

Episode 7: What is Antisemitism? | Grades 6–8

Name: _____

Date: _____

PART 1 — Vocabulary Reference

Antisemitism	Hatred, prejudice, and discrimination directed specifically at Jewish people as a group — targeting them for their religion, ethnicity, culture, and perceived influence.
Semite / Semitic	A term referring to a family of languages including Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic. Despite the root word, 'antisemitism' refers only to hatred of Jews.
Diaspora	The dispersal of a people from their original homeland. The Jewish diaspora refers to Jewish communities living outside the Land of Israel following ancient expulsions.
Pogrom	An organized, often government-tolerated or sponsored, violent attack against a minority group, especially Jewish communities in Europe and Russia.
Blood Libel	A false and deadly accusation that Jews murdered Christian children for religious rituals. First recorded in Norwich, England in 1144. A historically persistent lie.
Ghetto	A segregated area of a city where a minority group — historically Jews — was forced to live, often with severe restrictions on movement and livelihood.
Scapegoating	Blaming an individual or group for problems they did not cause, in order to deflect responsibility or channel public frustration and fear.
Pseudo-science	False or unproven ideas presented as if they were based on scientific evidence. Used in the 18th–19th centuries to falsely claim Jews were a biologically inferior 'race.'
Holocaust	The systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945.
Zionism	The political movement supporting the establishment and continuation of a Jewish state in the Jewish people's ancestral homeland (Israel).
Canary in the Coal Mine	A metaphor for an early warning of danger. Miners used to bring canaries underground; if the bird died, it warned of toxic gas. Applied to antisemitism: when Jews are persecuted, it warns of broader societal breakdown.
Conspiracy Theory	A belief that events are secretly controlled by a powerful group, usually without credible evidence. Antisemitism is described as a conspiracy theory because it falsely blames Jews for hidden control of societies.

PART 2 — Fill in the Blank

Use the vocabulary terms above to complete each sentence.

- 1 The term _____ was first coined in the 19th century by a German writer named Wilhelm Marr.
- 2 After the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in 70 AD, many Jews were expelled and forced into the _____ — living outside their homeland.
- 3 The false claim that Jews murdered Christian children for rituals is called the _____. The first recorded case was in 1144.
- 4 When a society blames one group for its problems without evidence, this is called _____.
- 5 The systematic murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany is called the _____.
- 6 Antisemitism is like a _____ in the coal mine — it warns of broader danger to democratic values in a society.
- 7 During the Middle Ages, Jews were forced to live in segregated areas of cities called _____.
- 8 When scientists falsely claimed that Jews were biologically inferior, they were using _____ — fake science.

PART 3 — Matching

Draw a line to match each term with its best description.

1. Blood Libel	A. A violent attack against a Jewish community
2. Pseudo-science	B. Jews living outside the Land of Israel
3. Scapegoating	C. Blaming a group for problems they didn't cause
4. Pogrom	D. Movement for Jewish self-determination
5. Zionism	E. False claim that Jews killed Christian children
6. Diaspora	F. Fake scientific theories used to justify racism

PART 4 — Short Answer

Answer each question in 2–3 complete sentences. Use at least one vocabulary word in each answer.

1. In your own words, explain why the term 'antisemitism' refers only to hatred of Jews, even though the word 'Semitic' refers to a larger language family.

2. Noa Tishby describes antisemitism as 'shape-shifting.' What does this mean? Give ONE example from history to support your answer.

3. Why do you think the 'canary in the coal mine' metaphor is used to describe antisemitism? What does it suggest about the responsibility of people who are NOT Jewish?

ANSWER KEY — For Teacher Use Only

Vocabulary Worksheet, Episode 7

Fill in the Blank — Answers

1. Antisemitism
2. Diaspora
3. Blood Libel
4. Scapegoating
5. Holocaust
6. Canary in the Coal Mine
7. Ghettos
8. Pseudo-science

Matching — Answers

- 1 → E
- 2 → F
- 3 → C
- 4 → A
- 5 → D
- 6 → B