

**Directions:** Read the articles below. Write an informative essay explaining how the ideas of *strength through discipline*, *strength through community* and *strength through action*, employed by Mr. Ross, were used by Adolf Hitler to deal with the problems in Germany prior to WWII. Use evidence from the reading below and the movie to back up your answer. Your essay will be three body paragraphs in length, include topic sentences and transition sentences.

## Why Do People Become Nazis?

From: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/why-do-people-become-nazis>

There is a great deal of controversy over why Germans followed Hitler and the Nazis; of course there is no way to know for sure. However, the most accepted answer is that normal Germans followed Hitler for several major reasons.

- **The problems and humiliation that Germany faced as a result of WWI.** Germany had been a proud and powerful nation. After WWI, though, its status in the world was ruined, as was its economy. The German people were, therefore, desperate for someone to fix their problems. When Hitler came along, promising a solution, they were more likely to follow him than they would have been in better times.
- **Long-standing prejudice against Jews.** When Hitler started blaming the Jews for Germany's problems, many Germans were willing to accept the argument because there had long been (throughout Europe) strong strains of anti-Semitism. It is easy to think the worst of a group that you already dislike at some level.
- **Fear.** Once the Nazis took real power it became very dangerous to oppose them. Their real atrocities did not start until they were so firmly entrenched in power that Germans pretty much had to obey them.
- **People were looking to belong to something and for a way to vent their stored-up hatred.** The Allies did everything they could to punish Germany as harshly as possible after WW I. If Premier Clemenceau (France) had his way fully there would have been no more Germany. Millions faced starvation while the peace talks went on because the Allies refused to allow food shipments in during the talks. Hitler and the Nazi Party gathered their recruits from those wanting revenge.

## The Wave Synopsis

At Gordon High School, history teacher Ben Ross is teaching his class about World War II and the Holocaust. His students are upset by the footage of concentration camps and question why the German people allowed this to happen, insisting they wouldn't be so easily duped. Ben Ross considers this and plans an experiment: the next day, he starts to indoctrinate the class using the slogan STRENGTH THROUGH DISCIPLINE. The class reacts well to this, embracing the sense of empowerment it gives them, and they continue their newly disciplined behavior into a second day of class, surprising Ross. He decides to take the experiment further and create a group, The Wave, adding two more slogans --STRENGTH THROUGH COMMUNITY and STRENGTH THROUGH ACTION - which lead to further rules of conduct and an organizational structure. And as most of the students join the movement, Laurie Saunders and David Collins recognize the frightening momentum of "The Wave" and realize they must stop it before it's too late.