

Modern History

Year 11 — Extended written response

SOURCE I (Seen)



Context statement

Extract from an article by Stephen Pagaard, a high school History teacher who published this article in 2005 to provide other teachers with '... some newer perspectives on the Hitler dictatorship and to demonstrate how the experience of young people in the Third Reich can be used as a case study.'

Reference details

Pagaard, S 2005, 'Teaching the Nazi dictatorship: Focus on youth', *The History Teacher*, vol. 38, no. 2, p. 203.

SOURCE J (Unseen)

The [Edelweiss] Pirates were composed mainly of students and working-class youth ... [Some Edelweiss Pirate groups] ... got involved in active anti-Nazi resistance work by writing graffiti, editing and passing out flyers and leaflets, and distributing pamphlets denouncing the Nazi regime. Some supported the Allies by hiding downed airmen, feeding prisoners, and offering help to German army deserters, political dissidents, and escapees from camps and prisons ... The activities of the deviant youth groups [Edelweiss Pirates] lacked the political organization to be anything more than an embarrassment to the regime. The isolation of these groups and individuals, their total lack of support from the majority from their compatriots ensured that social youth deviance would never amount to serious political opposition.

Context statement

Extract from a book by Jean-Denis GG Lepage, who has written extensively on the history of Nazi Germany.

Reference details

From **Hitler Youth, 1922-1945: An Illustrated History 2009**
© Jean-Denis G.G. Lepage by permission of McFarland & Company, Inc., Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640. www.mcfarlandpub.com

SOURCE K (Unseen)

... [T]he Edelweiss Piraten presents no security threat. It is a name adopted by ... loose living youths ... who have been forced into small gangs in order to obtain food and lodging. The gangs are formed usually in the vicinity of railroad yards or stations. The goods they steal are usually sold to black market operators. The Edelweiss insignia is seen frequently in Germany, and it has become fashionable to wear the badge.

Context statement

Extract from a report written by the Allied Powers' intelligence group on 20 August 1943.

Reference details

Boghardt, T 2013, 'Post-War II Army Intelligence in Germany', *Studies in Intelligence*, vol. 57, no. 2, p. 8.

SOURCE A (Seen)



Context statement

Photographs comparing a group of Hitler Youth (top) and a group of Edelweiss Pirates circa 1938–1942 (bottom).

Reference details

Huhn, F 1938, *Hitler Youth 'Landjahr' training camp* (image), Bournemouth News Picture Service.

Unknown, 1943, *Youths on tour* (image), retrieved 19 February 2016 from Museen Koeln, [www.museenkoeln.de/ns-dokumentationszentrum/pages/783.aspx?s=783#!prettyPhoto\[15001\]/3/](http://www.museenkoeln.de/ns-dokumentationszentrum/pages/783.aspx?s=783#!prettyPhoto[15001]/3/).

SOURCE B (Unseen)

Hitler's power may lay us low,

And keep us locked in chains.

But we will smash the chains one day,

We'll be free again.

We've got fists and we can fight,

We've got knives and we'll get them out.

We want freedom, don't we boys?

We're fighting Navajos.

Context statement

A translation into English of an Edelweiss Pirate song (circa 1943). The Navajos were the name of a group of Edelweiss Pirates stationed in Cologne.

Reference details

Burleigh, M & Wippermann, W 1991, *The Racial State: Germany 1933–1945*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, www.cambridge.org/core.

SOURCE C (Seen)

Uh, we used to play pool, and we had our little meetings there and one would say, 'We have a new member,' and, uh, we would ask him questions, test him, and 'Why do you like to join us?' and, you know, wanted to have some assurance. And, and, uh, then we, we pro ... 'What are we going to do next?' and maybe one would say, 'You know, the Hitler Youths, they all, uh, store their, uh, equipment at such-and-such a place. Let's make it disappear.' 'Okay, when are we going to meet?' Such-and-such a time. And that's what we did. It became, uh, it came to the point where we became enemies and people began to look for us because we went a little too drastic, we, you know we started maybe by deflating the tires, then we made the whole bicycle disappear, so it came to the point where too many complaints.

Context statement

Interview with Walter Meyer in 1996. He reflects upon his time as an Edelweiss Pirate in Germany during the early 1940s.

Reference details

Walter Meyer (interviewee) 1996 (interview transcript), retrieved 8 September 2016, https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_oi.php?ModuleId=0&MediaId=1236.

SOURCE D (Unseen)

Decree on Youth Gangs

Highly Confidential!

Memorandum to all Security Services and Police

Throughout the Reich, especially in the larger cities, associations of youth (gangs) [Edelweiss Pirates] have been forming in ever-increasing numbers of late. In part, these gangs exhibit criminal, anti-social, or oppositional political tendencies and therefore require intensified surveillance, especially in view of the absence due to the war of many fathers, Hitler Youth leaders, and educators.

All youth associations must be watched closely and appropriate steps must be taken against them as needed ...

Context statement

Extract from a top secret memorandum issued by Heinrich Himmler, head of the Protection Squadron (SS), to the Security Service (SD). It was issued on 25 October 1944.

Reference details

Rabinbach, A & Gilman, SL (eds.) 2013, *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

SOURCE E (Seen)



Context statement

Photograph of Edelweiss Pirates being prepared for execution by the Gestapo in Cologne on 10 November 1944.

Reference details

'Young people opposed to nazism (The Edelweiss Pirates) are hung in Cologne, november 1944' (image), retrieved 9 September 2016 from Rue des Archives/RDA/Süddeutsche Zeitung Photo, www.sz-photo.de/.

SOURCE F (Seen)

Located mainly in the Ruhr area, the Edelweiss Pirates — their badge, concealed by a lapel, being the small white flower found in the mountains and symbolizing freedom — liked to cycle or hitch to weekend meetings in the countryside where they sang new lyrics to commercial hits and protest versions of folk and hiking songs. The vague rebelliousness of their songs recalls the adolescent yearnings of the Wandervogel, 'Roamers', around the turn of the century. But the Edelweiss Pirates were a more political phenomenon. Their choice of traditional instruments (lute, guitar) mimicked and mocked the Hitler Youth Movement, especially through its juxtaposition with unconventional clothing ... Edelweiss Pirate songs would make a reappearance during the rock'n'roll riots of the mid-fifties in West Germany.

Context statement

Comments written in an academic article by Ralph Willett, a recently retired lecturer in American Studies at the University of Hull. He wrote these comments in 1989 as part of a broader discussion about how American music was used by young people in Germany as a form of protest against the Nazi party.

Reference details

Willett, R 1989, 'Hot swing and the dissolute life: Youth, style and popular music in Europe: 1939–49', *Popular Music*, vol. 8, no. 2, p. 158, www.cambridge.org/core.

SOURCE G (Seen)

... while the Edelweiss [Pirates] resolutely opposed the disciplinarianism of the HJ [*Hitler Jugend* or Hitler Youth], its own members rarely adopted any political goals at odds with the predominant Nationalist Socialist agenda. At most, there were a few nebulous connections to the Catholic and communist undergrounds ...

Overall, however, the political development of the Edelweiss was clearly limited by the age of its membership cadre and by the oppressive power of the Nazi police state, which atomized all forms of social and political opposition.

Context statement

Extract from an academic essay by Perry Biddiscombe, a Professor of History from the University of Victoria in Canada. He wrote this essay in 1995 to provide readers with American and British perspectives on the role played by the Edelweiss Pirates in Nazi Germany.

Reference details

Biddiscombe, P 1995, 'The enemy of our enemy: A view of the Edelweiss Pirates from the British and American archives', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 37–38.

SOURCE H (Seen)

The Edelweiss Pirates have become local heroes in Cologne and are due to be immortalized in film. The director Nico von Glasow said he made the film after being surprised to discover the existence of this group. He says like many Germans he knew nothing about the Edelweiss Pirates despite having grown up in Cologne.


And I wanted to know why I had not heard about them and I asked my friend Jean Jülich and he said something very interesting. He said that if there is one hero in the country then the rest of the country could say they knew nothing about what was going on. But if there is one hero on every street, then it looks bad for the rest of the street.

The rehabilitation of the Edelweiss pirates has once again touched upon the sense of collective post-war guilt in Germany. While many argue that it's important to regain a stronger sense of self-consciousness by acknowledging that there was a resistance against the Nazis, others caution against a tendency to focus on those exceptions at the risk of forgetting the greater proportion of the population who did nothing.

Context statement

Extract from an article by Jennifer Macey, an investigative journalist, who wrote this article in 2004 for the *Deutsche Welle*, Germany's international broadcaster.

Reference details

Macey, J 2004, 'Campaigning for Cologne's maligned resistance', © *Deutsche Welle*  www.dw.com/en/campaigning-for-colognes-maligned-resistance/a-1391096.