Hitler Youth

Hitler Youth march through Nuremberg, Germany past Nazi officials, including Julius Streicher. 1933.

Photo credit: USHMM Photo Archives

Source: (http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/olympics/zcb018.htm)
In The Book Thief, Liesel joins the BDM, Band of Jewish Girls, when she turns 10. As depicted in the photos above, there are some major issues to discuss concerning what would become the “in-crowd” as opposed to the Jews, who were socially, politically, culturally, and economically on the way “out.”

Answer the following questions about both photographs on the previous page:

1. What is the general scene here?
2. Who is pictured?
3. What is significant about the ways the boys are dressed in each photo?
4. When do you think this photo might have been taken?
5. Does this photo speak to group behavior? Why or why not?
6. How is it that these boys have come to this place where they are giving the Nazi salute?

**JIGSAW ACTIVITY:** Divide the class into six groups. Each group should read their assigned pages at The History Place’s entry on the Hitler Youth ...


Group 1: *Beginnings to 1923* (3 pages in length),
Group 2: *Road to Power 1923 – 1933* (7 pages),
Group 3: *Prelude to War 1933 – 1939* (8 pages),
Group 4: *Hitler's Boy Soldiers 1939 – 1945* (6 pages),
Group 5: *Aftermath - Nuremberg and Beyond* (3 pages),
Group 6: *Timeline and Organizational Info* (5 pages)

**DIRECTIONS:** Groups should read through the literature assigned to them and answer the following questions:

1. What tasks were the Hitler Youth expected to perform?
2. In your reading, how did the organization of the Hitler Youth change?
3. What specific actions did Hitler dictate or perform in regard to the Hitler Youth?
4. What specific direct actions did the Hitler Youth take against Jews or other target groups?
5. From the beginning to the end of your reading, is it your opinion that the Hitler Youth became a stronger and more effective (toward Nazi goals) organization, or weaker? Why do you feel this way?

Upon completion of the group work, each group should select a spokesperson to report their findings on the information they studied to the class. Perhaps the group of students that worked on the Beginnings article could serve as note-takers on the chalkboard, using a flowchart model for visualization.

**JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT:** Compare the images of youth on the following page.
"Youth Serves the Führer" is the title of this Hitler Youth recruiting poster (left).

Perhaps the most famous Nazi Youth poster of them all this one depicts a joyful BDM girl scout (right).

Page below is from the anti-Semitic German children's book, "Trau Keinem Fuchs..." (Trust No Fox in the Green Meadow and No Jew on his Oath)