Pre-Assessment-*Prisoner B-3087*

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_

Read the following paragraphs and practice annotating. Look for the parts of an argument essay and identify them. When you find a claim (there are 3), put a star next to it, underline any evidence, put a box around explanations, double underline the counter-argument (there are 3). Answer the questions the end.

**The following statements are from a group of people that state the Holocaust did not exist. Each statement is then followed by responses against that statement.**

**Responses to Revisionist Arguments from the Museum of Tolerance Website**

**http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/site/pp.asp?c=gvKVLcMVIuG&b=394667**

**1. The Holocaust was merely Allied propaganda**

The Allies actually ignored reports filtering out of Europe about the mass murder of Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators. Even when convinced of their veracity, they tried to withhold the information from the public. On August 8, 1942, Dr. Gerhart Riegner, the representative of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva, Switzerland, asked the U.S. legation in Switzerland to relay information about Germany's plan to exterminate all European Jews under its control to American Jewish leader, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. The information had been given to Riegner by a highly-placed German official. Instead of relaying the message, the U.S. State Department actually withheld it and ordered its Swiss legation not to relay any such reports in the future.

In the same year, a member of the Polish underground Jan Karski, had secretly been smuggled into a German concentration camp in Poland. Making his way out, he was sent to London by the Underground to deliver his report on the horrors he witnessed. Karski spoke with both Roosevelt and Churchill. History records, however, that Karski's pleas were largely dismissed.

One need only check the major newspapers of the period to realize how little attention was paid to Nazi atrocities. If the Holocaust were merely "propaganda," why did the Allies go to such lengths to downplay it?

**2. There is no proof that the Holocaust occurred.**

No crime in history has been as well-documented as the Holocaust. Proof of the Holocaust is multi-faceted. It is demonstrated by a myriad of documents, the majority of them Nazi-authored, captured by Allied troops before the Germans had a chance to destroy them. Included are detailed reports of mass shootings and gassings. Some 3,000 documents on the destruction of Europe's Jewish community by the Nazis were, in fact, presented by the prosection before war crimes tribunals at Nuremberg.

The first-hand testimony of survivors who lived through the horrors of the death camps as well as the reports and confessions by the perpetrators leave little doubt as to the nature of Hitler's "Final Solution." Horrifying films and photos of killing operations and their aftermath can only begin to give us a picture of the extent of Nazi bestiality; as do the reports of Allied Generals and troops who were sickened by what they saw at sites of slaughter they had just liberated.

Interestingly enough, Nazi war crimes suspects who stood trial in the post war years for their misdeeds never claimed that the crimes of which they were accused were fictional. They instead argued that they were "only following orders."

The evidence is, in fact, so overwhelming that on October 9, 1981, Judge Thomas T. Johnson of the California Superior Court, took judicial notice of the Holocaust ruling that, "The Holocaust is not reasonably subject to dispute. It is capable of immediate and accurate determination by resort to resources of reasonable indisputable accuracy. It is simply a fact."

**3. There is no proof the Nazis murdered anyone using gas chambers**

The use of gas chambers by the Nazis is proven by a wide array of evidence. Testimony by the perpetrators themselves as well as the first-hand accounts of prisoners, especially members of the "Sonderkommando" (groups of inmates forced to remove the dead from the gas chambers and dispose of their bodies) constitute only a part of the evidence.

Documents including blueprints of the killing installations as well as orders for construction materials and Zyklon B (the deadly hydrogen cyanide preparation used for gassings at Auschwitz and Majdanek...carbon monoxide exhaust was used at other camps) survived the war as did some of the actual gassing facilities themselves. Photos clandestinely taken by prisoners of Auschwitz-Birkenau even show the disposal of corpses removed from the gas chamber. The manufacture, distribution and use of the deadly gas was clearly demonstrated at the "Zyklon B Trial" in March 1946, Hamburg, Germany. Two of the defendants, Bruno Tesch and Karl Weinbacher, the owner and a major executive of a company that manufactured the gas were sentenced to death after notes of their trips to Auschwitz disproved their contention that they were unaware that the poison was used to kill inmates.

Jean-Claude Pressac, a one-time skeptic of the gas chambers, had undertaken a careful study of Auschwitz in which he analyzed a wide variety of camp documents, photos, reports and blueprints. Pressac, who had at one time been intrigued by the Holocaust-denying theories of Robert Faurisson, concluded that his original skepticism could no longer be supported in the face of the evidence. In 1989, the Klarsfeld Foundation published his study, Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers, in which Pressac demonstrates the use of the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau in the murders of hundreds of thousands of people.

Incidentally, Jews were not the first people gassed by the Nazis. The first victims of Nazi gassings were German mental patients condemned by Hitler's "Euthanasia" order of 1939.

**Answer the following questions:**

1. **What was the author’s purpose for including the information about Nazi soldiers were just following orders?**
	1. To show that Nazi soldiers were trained not to think for themselves.
	2. To paint Nazi soldiers are ruthless killing machines.
	3. To show that they never denied the incidents occurred.
	4. To show that the Nazis were trying to place blame elsewhere.
2. **What was the author’s purpose for writing this article?**
	1. To show the horrible circumstances during the Holocaust.
	2. To disprove ideas that the Holocaust didn’t occur.
	3. To show all Nazis were criminals.
	4. To paint Nazi soldiers as ruthless killing machines.
3. **Which piece of evidence gives the LEAST support to the idea that the Holocaust occurred?**
	1. On August 8, 1942, Dr. Gerhart Riegner, the representative of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva, Switzerland, asked the U.S. legation in Switzerland to relay information about Germany's plan to exterminate all European Jews under its control to American Jewish leader, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.
	2. It is demonstrated by a myriad of documents, the majority of them Nazi-authored, captured by Allied troops before the Germans had a chance to destroy them.
	3. The first-hand testimony of survivors who lived through the horrors of the death camps as well as the reports and confessions by the perpetrators leave little doubt as to the nature of Hitler's "Final Solution."
	4. Horrifying films and photos of killing operations and their aftermath can only begin to give us a picture of the extent of Nazi bestiality...