

Lesson 3

Focus Question Three

Step #4: Application

Strategy: Transferring Knowledge to a New Situation

Activities

Make copies of **Handout #16** (Americans are Natural Teachers of National Pride). Have the student read it silently and reflect on the message of the writer. Put the following purpose questions on the board before they begin reading:

- ▶ **Why does this writer feel that it is hard for a German to say “I am proud to be German?” What incidents in the past have led to this feeling? What “patriotic acts” still bring a sense of the horrors of Nazism?**
- ▶ **What does the writer feel are signs that Germany today will come to recognize that it is a country in transition - that Germany today is a healthy democracy ready to take its place with the other countries of Europe and with the United States?**
- ▶ **Why is the writer beginning to understand that the right to be proud of your country must be earned? Why is she now unafraid to say she is “proud of my country’s achievements?”**
- ▶ **How does the writer feel about America’s understanding of the Germany of today? Would she be pleased that you are making the effort to learn more about Germany?**

Have the students reflect on this passage from “The Life of Reason”.

George Santayana (Born, 16 December 1863 in Madrid, Spain; Died, 26 September 1952 in Rome, Italy) was a philosopher, essayist, poet and novelist.

*Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. **Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.***

This famous statement has produced many paraphrases and variants:

- ▶ *Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.*
- ▶ *Those who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat their mistakes.*
- ▶ *Those who do not read history are doomed to repeat it.*
- ▶ *Those who fail to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors are destined to repeat them.*

Topic 2

Political Institutions in Germany

Lesson 3

Focus Question Three



Activities (continued)

Make copies of **Handout #17** (Holocaust Education in Germany). Have the students read the handout and relate it to the above quote from Santayana.

- ▶ **What is Germany doing to ensure that the mistakes of the past won't be repeated?**

Have the students reread the last paragraph of this handout:

The objective of teaching about the Holocaust is not limited to educating students about historical facts. Instead, the primary political and educational objective for confronting young Germans with their country's darkest past and their ancestors' guilt is, above all, to make them understand the consequences of Hitler's dictatorship, the uniqueness of the Holocaust, and to make them appreciate the values and institutions that protect freedom and democracy.

- ▶ **How is Germany moving into a new era of democracy and freedom for all of its citizens?**

Show **Transparency #23: Topic 4, Lesson 5** (Holocaust Memorial) as students discuss this question and reflect on the future of Germany.

✓ Check for Understanding

How is Germany moving into a new era of democracy and freedom for all of its citizens?

Have the students list the changes in Germany since World War II that indicate that Germany is once again taking its place among the free nations of the world. Have them consider:

- Governmental changes
- Foreign policy changes
- Cultural changes
- Educational changes