**Interwar in Film: Swing Kids**

**Background: “The German Swing Kids”**
While Hitler was rising in power, he was preaching a rhetoric of being “good Germans” and embracing “German culture”. During this time, jazz and swing music from America was coming into Germany and the young people there started to get interested in this new music.

Hitler and the Nazi regime saw this music as a threat to Germany- they were convinced that it would corrupt young kids and take away from the “good German” message. Hitler and the Nazis realized that they needed to control the German youth, so they started programs to get young people into the Nazi movement. The biggest of these was the “Hitler Youth” program, called the “HJ” (Hitler Jungend).

Hitler said “Our Youth must learn nothing else, but to only think like and act like Germans! We must get our boys into a Party Organization at the age of 10, where they can be immersed for the very first time in the totality of pure German spirit...In this manner, they will not live freely apart from the service of Germany for their entire lives!”

The German Swing Youth rebelled against this idea and went to secret night clubs to listen and dance to Western jazz. They dressed like Americans and saw the West as a “paradise” where people were free and could do what they wanted.

**AS YOU WATCH** record examples of the following... on the next page

- How do fascist governments control their citizens’ actions?
- How do fascist governments attempt to influence citizens’ beliefs and mindsets?
- What rebellious actions do individuals take? What’s the result?
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AFTER VIEWING THE FILM...

The three main characters (Peter, Thomas, and Arvid) represent three types of German people during the Interwar Era; those who went along with the Nazis and supported their ideas, those who opposed the Nazis but stayed quiet, and those who vocally opposed the Nazis.

Determine the category that the main characters fit into and use specific examples to support how they demonstrated those characteristics.

THOMAS (son of the doctor)
Category: _____________________________
Why? Be specific.

What do you think happened to him?

PETER (son of the musician)
Category: ______________________________________________________
Why? Be specific.

What do you think happened to him?

ARVID (played the guitar)
Category: ______________________________________________________
Why? Be specific.