



LESSONS





Lesson One

WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY



Approximate Time

60 minutes

Materials

- *Handout 1.1* (War Crimes and International Law)

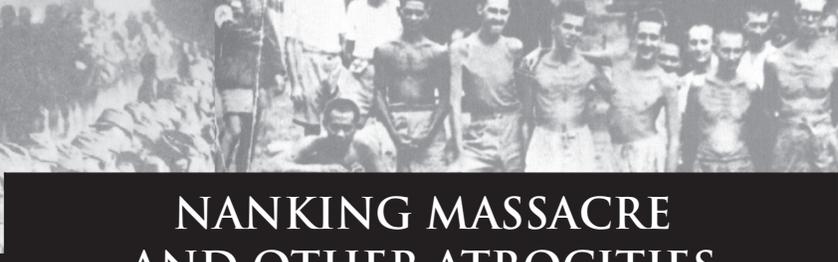
Overview

Students use excerpts from various agreements, including the Geneva conventions, the Hague conventions, United Nations conventions, and the Charter of International Military Tribunal, to understand legal definitions and responsibilities related to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Students participate in a Think/Pair/Share activity to develop answers to a set of critical questions about the rules of war.
 - Ask students to individually answer each of the following questions on a sheet of paper:
 - Are there rules for war?
 - If there are rules for war, who makes them?
 - Who ensures that the rules are followed?
 - What happens if the rules are not followed?
 - Then have each student share his or her answers with another student. When the pairs of students have decided on complete answers for the questions, have the pairs record their answers on chart paper. When completed, display their charts for use later in the lesson.
2. Students become familiar with wars around the world during the 20th century.
 - Have students make a list of wars that took place during the 20th century. They might include: Anglo Boer War, Arab Israeli conflict, Algerian Civil War, Cambodian War, Chechnya conflict, Korean War, Vietnam War, India Pakistani War, Mexican War, Middle East Wars, as well as more current armed conflicts such as the wars in the Balkans, East Timor, the Philippines, Rwanda and Burundi and Ethiopia.
 - You may want to extend the discussion by presenting articles about some of these conflicts from history textbooks, library references, the Internet, and current magazines and newspapers.

3. Students become familiar with international laws related to war crimes and crimes against humanity.
 - Provide students with copies of *Handout 1.1* (War Crimes and International Law) and invite them to compare the official rules with their answers to the questions asked in the first activity.
 - Have students revise their answers on the charts.



Lesson Two

NANKING MASSACRE AND OTHER ATROCITIES

Approximate Time

60 minutes

Materials

- *Handout 2.1* (Timeline of Origins and Events of the Asia-Pacific War)
- *Handout 2.2* (Rape of Nanking and Other Atrocities)

Overview

Students investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Japanese Imperial Army to identify which international agreements were breached. Students express personal views about crimes committed during times of war.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

We strongly recommend that the teacher give students the following information before having them read the articles in *Handout 2.1* (Rape of Nanking and Other Atrocities)

“The articles you will be reading contain some graphic details about rape, murder and other acts of brutality. If you feel uncomfortable reading this material, please feel free to talk to me or even leave the room if necessary.”

1. Students read about war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Japanese Imperial army to identify which international agreements were breached.
 - Provide students with *Handout 2.1* (Timeline of Origins and Events of the Asia-Pacific War) to use as a reference in this and the other lessons in this resource.
 - Provide students with *Handout 2.2* (Rape of Nanking and Other Atrocities). Have students read the articles and make a list of the crimes committed by the Japanese Imperial Army (e.g., biological warfare, mistreatment of POWs, sexual enslavement, forced labour, murder).
 - Then ask students to identify for each case which international agreements were breached.
2. Students express personal views about crimes committed during times of war.
 - Organize students into discussion groups.

- Work with students to decide on the criteria they should demonstrate in their discussions. For example:
 - communicates effectively and respects opinions of others
 - clearly identifies and defines problems and issues of atrocities
 - refers to material presented to support personal views
 - shows willingness to reassess a position as necessary if presented with new information
 - identifies human rights violations and their implications both in a historical sense and using contemporary standards of behaviour
- Present the groups with questions such as the following to encourage them to express their personal views about atrocities committed during times of war.
 - What concerned you the most about the atrocities described in the articles? Explain your reasons.
 - How did those who set up the International Safety Zone try to help the people of Nanking? What possible risks did the members of the Safety Zone face? How do you think you would react in this situation?
 - Think about all of the atrocities described. What would allow such atrocities to happen?
 - What lessons can be learned from the study of these historical events?



Lesson Three

CANADIAN HONG KONG VETERANS

Approximate Time

60 to 90 minutes

Materials

- *Handout 3.1* (Canadian Prisoners of War)
- *Handout 3.2* (Response Guide for Canadian Prisoners of War)

Overview

Students investigate the treatment of Canadian Hong Kong prisoners of war and the war crimes committed by the Japanese Imperial Army. Students identify which international agreements were breached. They differentiate between civilian and military victims and make explicit the connection to Canada.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

Special Note: The video, *Savage Christmas: Hong Kong 1941*, is available in many libraries. It can be used with the activities that follow as an alternative to using the print materials. Note: We strongly recommend that teachers preview this video before presentation.

1. Students make explicit the connection to Canada as they investigate the treatment of Canadian prisoners of war in Hong Kong and the crimes against humanity committed by the Japanese Imperial Army.
 - Provide students with copies of *Handout 3.1* (Canadian Prisoners of War). Students can use the questions from *Handout 3.2* (Response Guide for Canadian Prisoners of War) to make notes as they read the articles or view the excerpts you selected from the video.
2. Students differentiate between civilian and military victims as they identify which international agreements were breached.
 - Tell students to refer to *Handout 1.1* (War Crimes and International Law) to help them identify which international agreements were breached.
 - Point out the differences in the laws regarding civilian and military prisoners.



INTERNATIONAL LAW, RECONCILIATION, AND REDRESS

Lesson Four

Overview

Through the vehicle of a mock justice tribunal, students weigh evidence provided to determine whether Japan has settled its obligations with regard to war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Japanese Imperial forces.

Teaching/Learning Strategies

Before starting this lesson, teachers may find it helpful to review the “Guidelines for Teaching About Controversial Issues” at the beginning of this resource. The issue of Japanese redress for its wartime violations of human rights is a contentious one and can be difficult to manage in a classroom discussion. Attempts to reach a judgement on questions like these can easily lead to a “chain” of grievances (“what about the Canadian internment of Japanese Canadians?; what about human rights in Tibet?” etc.). Students may also feel they have to “take sides” based on their own ethnic identity. Teachers might want to stress that this activity is about concepts of justice, not about taking sides.

1. Students use the various handouts in this resource as well as their own research to prepare a mock justice tribunal hearing.
 - Provide students with *Handouts 4.1-4.4* (Organizing a Mock Justice Tribunal) and review the main tasks and the hearing process.
 - Divide the class into three groups, each with one of the following roles: tribunal members (judges); advocates for victims (prosecution); representatives for the Japanese government (defence). Review with students the other handouts for this and the other lessons and how each can be used by the different groups.
 - Have each group identify research questions and additional sources of information.

Time

60 to 90 minutes

Materials

- *Handout 4.1* (Organizing a Mock Justice Tribunal)
- *Handout 4.2* (What Victims and Survivors Want)
- *Handout 4.3* (International Agreements Related to Compensation Claims)
- *Handout 4.4* (Japan’s Responses)

- Remind students that the success of the hearing depends on an imaginative and thorough representation by all three role-play groups. Encourage them to use the initial group discussion to identify research tasks to be carried out by each group member.
- During the hearing, have students keep a point-form record of the arguments and counter-arguments to use as a resource for writing their responses.
- Explain the meaning of the terms *redress*, *reconciliation* and *compensate*.

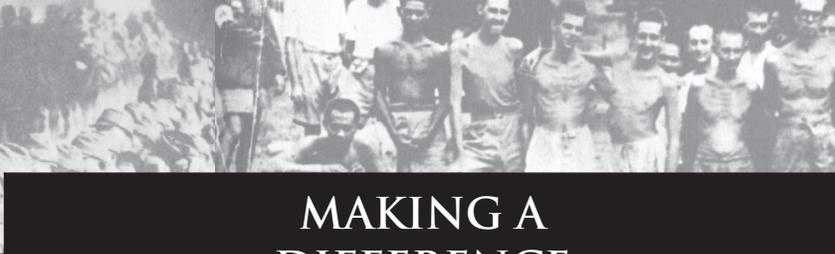
Redress: to acknowledge a wrong that was committed, the United Nations includes in its definition of redress violations of human rights (including war crimes and crimes against humanity). Redress is an act of amending injustice and may include apology, monetary compensation, as well as measures to prevent the recurrence of such injustices.

Reconcile: to harmonize; make compatible by overcoming a hatred or mistrust. To reconcile is to rebuild a sincere relationship without prejudice.

Compensate: to provide a payment of money to make up for a wrong that was committed. It may include payment to individual victims or their surviving family members. Compensation can also be funds established to victimized communities.

- Make students aware of the differences between legal and moral issues.
- Before students present and defend their views, remind them of the following guidelines:
 - the hearing process is meant to help them understand how international tribunal hearings are used to deal with conflicting positions, and to gain confidence in considering the political, moral and legal issues involved in reaching a judgement.
 - arguments are convincing to the degree that they are logical and supported by relevant facts

- the prosecution and defence address their arguments only to the tribunal and do not rebut each other directly.
 - whatever their role, their responsibility in the tribunal process is to listen carefully to the arguments presented and to respect the tribunal’s final verdict of the tribunal,
 - arguments include implications for individuals and society
 - To evaluate student’s work, consider awarding marks to students who deliver points for the prosecution or defence and additional marks for the quality of their points. Each tribunal member could be given marks for keeping a point-form record of the arguments and counter-arguments.
2. Students write a reflective response discussing what they think are the most viable solutions that will be fair to the victims and survivors of Japan’s wartime crimes and to the Japanese people.
- Have students consider the evidence from the tribunal hearing and from other lessons in this resource to develop their responses.
 - Work with students to develop criteria for assessment of their responses, for example:
 - clearly states your opinion regarding viable solutions
 - uses specific details and examples from the tribunal hearing, handouts, and other sources to support your opinion
 - groups related ideas together
 - comes to a logical conclusion regarding the most viable solutions that will be fair to the victims and survivors of Japan’s wartime crimes and to the Japanese people



Lesson Five

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Approximate Time

60 minutes

Materials

- *Handout 5.1* (Unit Self-Assessment)

Overview

Students respond to a topic that will cause them to reflect upon individual and collective responsibility for preventing war crimes and crimes against humanity from occurring.

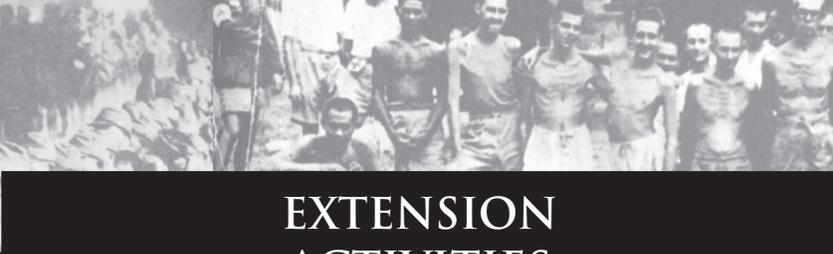
Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Students express their personal views on individual and collective responsibility for preventing war crimes and crimes against humanity from occurring.
 - Prompt a class discussion using questions such as the following:
 - What should the international community do about crimes against humanity?
 - What actions should individuals, nations, or the international community take to compensate the victims and survivors of atrocities?
 - How can crimes against humanity be prevented in the future (e.g., do we need more laws, more education, more enforcement)?
2. Students write an essay to express their views on preventing war crimes and crimes against humanity.
 - Have students write an in-class essay or personal position paper on one of the following topics. Have students select appropriate handouts from other lessons to provide background for their essays. Possible topics include:
 - What should Canada as part of the international community do about crimes against humanity? How can crimes against humanity be prevented?
 - Tragically, crimes against humanity continued through to the end of the 20th century (e.g., Cambodia, Rwanda, and Yugoslavia). While each has its own historic conditions, what do they have in common? What should the international community do about crimes against humanity? How can crimes against humanity be prevented?

- Before they begin, work with students to develop criteria to evaluate their essays, for example:
 - clearly defines the issue
 - explains opposing points of view and supports them with examples
 - draws articulate, logical conclusions
 - develops and defends a plausible resolution
 - includes focused and relevant evidence, examples, and arguments

Unit Self-Assessment

Goals for the unit are stated in the introduction. The goals encourage critical thinking on issues related to the content of the unit, with the overall outcome of promoting understanding of the requirements of a socially responsible citizen. You might want to have the students complete a self-assessment such as the Handout 5.1 (Unit Self-Assessment) to identify the extent to which they see themselves as socially responsible citizens. Encourage them to use work produced during the unit to as part of the evidence to support their ratings.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

If time permits and the situation warrants, consider using or modifying one of the following extension activities, which are intended to enhance the student’s understanding of the key concepts of this unit, exploring issues, investigating evidence, and taking action to make a difference.

- 1.** Have students draft letters to the local media, Member of Parliament, MLA, or foreign government regarding a current issue they want to address. Assess their work for the extent to which the letter clearly identifies an issue, expresses a point of view, supports the view with logical argument, and recommends appropriate action.
- 2.** To illustrate how war crimes continue today, have students create a “Wall of War Crimes.” Students do a search of the web and news media to find reports of current war atrocities. They might also contact Amnesty International for information on current issues related to war crimes.